The Story of William Threlfall

THOMAS CHEESEMAN

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THE STORY OF WILLIAM THRELFALL

THE STORY

OF

William Threlfall

Missionary Martyr of Namaqualand

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF

JACOB LINKS AND JOHANNES JAGER

WHO FELL WITH HIM

BY THE

REV. THOMAS CHEESEMAN

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WITH REVERENT LOVE

TO

MY DEAR WIFE

WHO FOR OVER TWENTY-FIVE YEARS HAS BEEN MY GUARDIAN ANGEL, TO

WHOSE LOVING DEVOTION AND SOUND ADVICE I OWE MORE

THAN I CAN EVER EXPRESS.

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PREFACE.

My excuse for inflicting another book, however small, upon a long-suffering public is that a story new to the present generation of Methodists, which ought not to be forgotten, is here related. The present work has grown, I know not how, out of what was intended to be a simple review of the Rev. Samuel Broadbent's "Missionary Martyr of Namaqualand," a book, long since out of print, in which Mr. Threlfall's career is sketched with much ability and at considerable length.

It was my privilege to spend four of the happiest years of my ministry at Kamiesberg, in charge of the very Station from which Mr. Threlfall started on his journey into Great Namaqualand, and the reading of Mr. Broadbent's Memoirs has revived old memories and afforded, as nothing else could, the necessary stimulus for the production of the following pages.

The book, such as it is, has been a labour of love, and I shall feel amply rewarded if, as the result of its perusal, missionary enthusiasm is kindled in some hearts for the first time, if the zeal for Christian Missions, which in other hearts may have been allowed to languish, is fanned into a flame, and if, generally, a quickened interest in the evangelization of the heathen of South Africa is created.

I gratefully acknowledge the kindly criticism and valuable suggestions of several friends to whom the proofs of this little work were submitted. In this connection the Rev. Frederick Mason, of Durban, deserves special mention.

T.C.

Cape Town, January 26, 1910.

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THE STORY

OF

WILLIAM THRELFALL,

MISSIONARY MARTYR OF NAMAQUALAND.

CHAPTER I.

Conversion and Call to the Ministry.

The writer of these pages is indebted to Mrs. Hincksman, of Lytham, Lancashire, daughter of the late Rev. Samuel Broadbent, for the loan of the little volume (now out of print) which suggested the following sketch. William Threlfall, the "Missionary Martyr of Namaqualand," fell by the cruel hand of the assassin thirty-two years before Mr. Broadbent's memorials were published. Yet of the authenticity of the facts contained therein, there can be no doubt. Of this we shall find abundant evidence as we proceed. Fortunately for us, Mr. Broadbent had access to the martyred missionary's journal, as well as to letters and other documents of priceless value, and these he used freely in the work of enthralling interest which he offered to the public fifty-three years ago. The story as a whole is one of the most thrilling in the annals of missionary history, and the facts related of the ardent young missionary, who met his untimely end when only twenty-six years of age, prove once more that fact is sometimes stranger than fiction. A melancholy interest must, under any circumstances have attached to all that was known of the first missionary martyr of our Church in South Africa, but when it is realised that William Threlfall combined with

a singularly winsome personality mental and moral qualities of a high order, that he was a man of saintly character, whose zeal for the conversion of the heathen amounted to a holy passion, and that he died, alas! with the morning dew of youth still fresh upon him, we must be apathetic indeed, if the recital of his tragic story kindles no answering enthusiasm in our breast. Nor is it of William Threlfall alone that we think with loving admiration as we lay down Mr. Broadbent's little volume. We are introduced to other characters whose exalted conduct strengthens our faith in human nature, and stimulates within us all that is noblest and best. It is impossible to think too highly of Mr. Threlfall's father, whose remarkable generosity and complete submission to an inscrutable Providence is only equalled by the conduct of his martyred son. And the names of those who were "baptized for the dead," who dared to follow in the martyr's footsteps and plant the Standard of the Cross in the land stained with the martyr's blood—the descendants of whom are in our midst and in our Ministry to-day—should be held in everlasting remembrance. But more of this anon.

William Threlfall, the son of Richard Threlfall, was born June 6th, 1799, at Hollowforth, near Preston, Lancashire. The family had lived on the same estate for several generations, and Richard Threlfall, when his son William was born, carried on the trade of a tanner, like his forebears, and was in comfortable circumstances: a fact to be remembered when we think of the hardships and privations which the martyr voluntarily endured. Young Threlfall was one of a numerous family, all of whom were living when Mr. Broadbent wrote his "Memorials." His parents, who were patterns of all that Christian parents ought to be, lived to a ripe old age, having the honour as well as the anguish (not to be described) of giving, not unwillingly, to South Africa the first Methodist martyr to the cause of Christ. Yet not the first, for that honour belongs equally to the brave Namaquas who accompanied the young missionary to Great Namaqualand, Jacob Links and Johannes Jager, who must ever be inseparably associated with William Threlfall as

"Missionary Martyrs." For, if the accounts which have been handed down to us are trustworthy, and of this there seems no doubt, the two Namaquas, faithful to the last, were the first to fall.

It is not surprising to learn that young Threlfall, under the gracious influences of the Spirit, sought and found Christ, when but seventeen years of age. In a letter to his cousin, an account of his conversion, from his own pen, has been preserved to us. He seems to have sought the Lord with all his heart for two whole months, before deliverance came. He then wrote as follows:—

> "I saw my danger of eternal death. I verily found that I was altogether unlike God; and that it was impossible for me to live or die happy except my sins were pardoned, and my soul converted from a love of sin to the love of God. I thought if any were reprobated to that place 'where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched,' I was surely one of them. I was often led to wish that I had never been born, or that I had died in infancy. I frequently strove to stifle my sensibility of danger by associating with the gay and careless, or by reading plays and novels. This had the effect of hardening my heart and darkening my mind. It was the way to endless ruin; it led me farther and farther from God and from happiness. But, still I knew there was a day fast approaching, a day of trial which I could not escape; and this was a sting to all my sinful pleasures and foolish diversions, even when my companions thought me the most jovial of the party. But the Lord, who has the lives of all men in His hand, called a relative, at a few minutes' warning, from a state of perfect health into the invisible world, to give account to his Maker. This awful providence had a powerful effect upon my mind. I thought: 'If the Lord were to call *me* to an account suddenly, I am sure to perish for ever and ever.' My feelings were aroused, and I began to pray, 'O, Lord! if I may still be saved, if I am not indeed out of the reach

of Thy mercy, look down upon me and save me; for, if Thou call me hence, I shall be lost to all eternity. If Thou canst, soften my heart, break down my pride, subdue my stubborn will, and make me a new creature, make bare Thine arm, and save my soul.' This was on a Sunday. I was much tempted to give up praying; for I thought there was no mercy for me. But I thought again, 'I cannot but hope there may still be mercy; therefore, I will never cease praying; and, if I perish, I perish. If I don't pray I am sure to be lost; therefore I will pray, and—

> If I never find the sacred road,
> I'll perish crying out for God.'

My heart was still hard, though I saw my danger. I heard a sermon on the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke xv.). While the preacher explained the subject, I thought my conduct had been very much like that of the prodigal, for I had tried to find happiness in every thing in which I had ability to indulge, but could not find it. And I thought his prayer would just suit me: 'I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto Him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in Thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son.' But when the preacher came to speak of the compassion of his father, against whom he had sinned,—seeing him a great way off, and running to meet him, and falling on his neck and kissing him,—I could hold out no more for weeping; my hardness gave way, and my soul was dissolved in penitential tenderness. While he spoke of the love of God to poor sinners, and His willingness to save all them who came unto Him (may I never forget it; for my heart weeps for joy while I write,—O, what love and compassion to the most ungrateful of all the human race!) He set my soul at liberty, and I was enabled to say: 'Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And who is there on earth that I desire in comparison with Thee?' I felt and saw God was reconciled. Now I

could praise God from a conviction of His mercy, and knew He was my Friend; neither was I afraid, for the Lord was my 'Refuge and Strength.'"

It is a means of grace to read the account of such a conversion as this, and we have allowed Mr. Threlfall to give it in his own words because it explains much that follows. It marked, as Mr. Broadbent says, a new era in his life, and he was wont to observe his spiritual birthday, with religious solemnity and joy.

Mr. Threlfall's conversion was a typical one from which many lessons might be drawn. He passed through all the agony of conviction of sin, and sought the Lord long and earnestly, with crying and tears, before he found Him to the joy of his soul. And when at last he identified himself with the returning prodigal and fell like him into his Father's arms, and was taken like him to his Father's heart, his entire outlook upon life was changed. The missionary spirit not to be quenched even by death itself was kindled within him, and from the first he sought to lead others especially his sisters his neighbours and his youthful associates, to the Saviour whom he loved and passionately desired to serve.

Several entries made in his journal, about a year after his conversion, show that the burden of souls was laid upon him; while an entry dated 24th June, 1817, when he was but 18 years of age, reveals the extraordinary depth of his piety, and the intensity of his longing for "the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ." He writes:

"I bless God that I am what I am. Last night I went into an outbuilding to pour out my soul to the Lord. I wanted to give myself, body and soul, to Him afresh.

'I held Him with a trembling hand,
But would not let Him go.'

The language of my heart was, 'I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.' I had a strong faith, and I did believe that the

> Lord was able and willing to bless me at present; and He did indeed bless me. But, some way or other, I felt afraid of the blessing in full. I felt the drops; but, O the fulness of God! My heart was filled. 'By faith I plunge me in this sea.' I dedicate myself afresh to the great I AM this solemn moment, for Thee to live, and for Thee to die—William Threlfall, age 18 years and 18 days. I am Thine, blessed Jesus! Amen. Amen."

After the record of so remarkable an experience, in one so young, we are prepared to expect great things from William Threlfall, and it is not surprising to learn that about six months later, he heard what he believed to be God's voice calling to him to labour in the Mission-field. It is singular that from the first he had the impression that his call was to Madagascar, and his longing, which amounted to a passion, to preach the Gospel there, remained with him until the end. About this period he became a local preacher, and, as such, he is said to have been zealous, laborious and useful, exhibiting grace, gifts and fruit.

But necessity was laid upon him to preach the Gospel to the heathen of Madagascar, and to prepare for this, he applied himself diligently to the study of the French language. It is characteristic of the man that on December 23rd, 1819, he wrote in his journal: "To-day I feel my mind much engaged in prayer to Almighty God, through Jesus Christ, for the conviction of the truth of Christianity to be fixed in the mind of my French master,—whom I respect and love as a teacher and whose salvation I do most earnestly desire." In the month of March of the following year—1820—he appeared as a candidate for the Ministry before the Quarterly Meeting of his Circuit. He seems to have passed successfully through this first gate of entrance to the Methodist Ministry, and in the following May we find him attending the District Meeting of Ministers held in Liverpool, with the illustrious Dr. Adam Clarke in the Chair. It is stated that when on this occasion Mr. Threlfall gave a sketch of his life, relating his personal experience of the grace of God, and his feelings with regard to the island of Madagascar, whilst all the preachers heard him patiently, some

wept. It is evident that the District Meeting was favourably impressed with the young man, and though its decision is not recorded by Mr. Broadbent, we find that from this time the thought of leaving his loved ones began to cast its shadow over him. Already he felt the wrench which parting, perhaps for ever, would mean to his highly sensitive and affectionate nature, and very fervently did he pray that the necessary grace might be given unto him and his: "O Lord, bless my dear and much respected parents: may our hearts not be so knit together, but that we may suffer Thee to untie them; and if any wound is made by the struggle, bind up the broken heart."

The Conference was held that year, in the month of August, in Liverpool. Mr. Threlfall attended many of the services, and sat at the feet of some distinguished ministers and missionaries. The Rev. S. Leigh had a thrilling story to tell of his Mission in New South Wales and New Zealand. He spoke of the privations he had endured, and of the perils to which he had been exposed among the cannibal islanders of the South Pacific; but all this intensified rather than quenched our hero's longing to proceed at once to Madagascar. It is gratifying, however, to find that when his passionate desire was not likely to be realised, he submitted at once to the Divine will, declaring himself satisfied if only the Gospel were preached there. This is certainly remarkable in one so young, and it testifies, more perhaps than anything else could, to the reality of his piety.

In the following September we see him proceeding to London, at the request of the Rev. Joseph Taylor, General Missionary Secretary, to be examined by the Missionary Committee. A little later he informs his sister that his examination is over and that he has preached several times. And some nine days after, in a most affectionate letter to his parents, he writes: "I am accepted, but my appointment is not yet fully determined upon. It is most likely that I shall, after some months, be sent to Madagascar." It was indeed several months before the final call came, and then it was not to Madagascar, but to South Africa. But the time of waiting was not lost; he was sent as a "supply" to the island of Jersey, where he laboured with much zeal and success. On August

23rd, of the following year, his name appears in the Minutes of Conference as an "accepted candidate." He is still waiting for the Stations but not impatient. The Rev. Samuel Broadbent, the author of Mr. Threlfall's Memorials, was down at that time for Madagascar, and, young Threlfall's heart must have beaten quickly, when he discovered that "another was to be sent"! Surely the desire of his heart was at last about to be gratified! Mr. Broadbent was then stationed at Kamiesberg, happily engaged with the Rev. E. Edwards. The Rev. Barnabas Shaw was Chairman of the District, and from him Mr. Broadbent received instructions to proceed to Capetown, and there await the arrival of a missionary whom he was to accompany to the island of Madagascar. But though Mr. Broadbent went to Capetown, at the behest of the Chairman, *en route,* as he thought, for Madagascar, and though the young minister thought, not unnaturally, that he, too, was to be sent to the island, around which all his desires so strangely centred, the hopes of neither the one nor the other were to be realised; for the Committee's plans were altered, and the proposed Mission to Madagascar was abandoned, *for lack of funds.* In view of what afterwards took place one cannot help reflecting upon what might have been, but for the impoverished state of the Society's funds at that time. Can it be that the will of God was frustrated concerning the ardent young missionary who was so soon to be cruelly murdered in South Africa, "owing to the state of the Society's funds"? Can it be that there were those, then living, whose liberality might have saved his life? We cannot tell. But this we know, that the purposes of God are conditioned by the actions of men, and that the wheels of the Gospel chariot still move heavily, and its course is still impeded "owing to the state of the Society's funds."

When it was mentioned to Mr. Threlfall by the Rev. R. Watson, one of the General Missionary Secretaries, that there were difficulties connected with his going to Madagascar, and suggested that it was as important to convert the Kaffirs as the Malagasies, the young minister agreed, and intimated his willingness to go wherever the providence

of God might direct; but in a letter to the Rev. J. Brown, he declares that when the proposal was made, so keen was his disappointment, he thought he should have died, and that he would have been satisfied to be cast naked, with his Bible only, on any part of the shores of Madagascar. "O, Madagascar!" he said, "thou hast my heart; I cannot feel willing to give thee up. My absence from thee makes me weep, and sigh, and groan." There is no doubt he would have gone at his own expense had he been allowed, for he was not without means, and liberality was one of the leading traits of his character. But though willing to go with the sanction and prayers of the Committee—believing that He who cares for the birds of the air and clothes the lilies of the field, would not suffer him to want—he durst not venture without them. The struggle he had with the desire, which amounted to a passion, to go to Madagascar, was long and severe, and sometimes when he thought the passionate longing had left him, and that he had submitted to the will of God, it awoke again to newness of life. But victory came at last, and with victory rest, as the following extract from his diary shows, dated 25th September, 1821:—

> "This morning my mind was the same with respect to my call. I think I felt a kind of anxious care; but the Lord delivered my soul from it, in a moment. It caused me to shed many tears, desiring to know His will. The Committee might not know the workings of my mind, and, consequently, might not do as they would if they knew. I fell prostrate with my face to the floor, and looked to the Lord; when immediately all my burden was gone, and I was quite delivered from all anxiety. The Lord can make me willing to go anywhere, with cheerfulness. Bless the Lord, O my soul, for this sensible deliverance! He does care for me, and sends me help from His dwelling-place."

When on the 1st of October, he was informed that the Committee had practically decided on his appointment to South Africa, he says: "I could say nothing against it," but, he immediately adds:

"So much nearer Madagascar." On the 25th of the same month he was ordained, with another missionary, by the imposition of hands, to the work of the Ministry. It was a solemn occasion for the two young men—a time of great heart-searching and reconsecration—and they prepared for it by fasting and prayer. Amongst the ministers who took part in the service were the venerable Walter Griffith, and the great theologian, Richard Watson.

CHAPTER II.

A Farewell and a Welcome.

As the time drew near for the young man's departure, he paid a visit to the old home at Hollowforth, and the meeting between father and son is pathetically described as follows:—

> "Met my father a little way from the house, going to the chapel. The moment I saw him my feelings were irrepressible. My heart was full, and beat with joy; the tears started from my eyes; I fell upon his neck, and exclaimed: '*My dear father!*' He responded with a faltering tongue: 'My dear child!' We could say no more for some time, but wept for joy."

A week later he had parted from his loved ones for ever. He could thank God that they had given him up cheerfully, yet had they "mingled their food with their tears." The feeling, too deep for words, is not unknown to most ministers who have come to South Africa. So great indeed was the pain of parting from loved ones, to some of them, that they shrink to-day even from the joy of meeting, fearing lest the wound should be opened afresh. The Angel of Death seems on such occasions to hover near, and upon those who go and those who stay, the shadow of his presence falls.

Soon the anchor is weighed, and on Monday, December 10th, the white cliffs of Old England are left behind; and now occurs one of the many extraordinary acts of generosity for which Mr. Threlfall was noted. The day after sailing, the pilot left the ship in the Downs, bearing a letter to be afterwards posted to the departing minister's father. It contained a strange request. Mr. Threlfall, senr., was to pay to

Mr. Taylor, for the Missionary Society, the sum of £100, on his son's account. He adds: "I give it freely to the cause of Missions, for the sake of Jesus Christ, who was rich, but for my sake became poor, that I through His poverty might be made rich. . . ." "I can give no more to Him, to whom my more than all is due. And I think, had I ten thousand times ten thousand more, the cause of Missions should have it all." To the honour of the father, it should be recorded that he consented to his son's request.

The passage seems to have been an uneventful one, but there is evidence that the youthful voyager made his influence felt. For better or for worse, men are known at sea, and some who have been highly successful on land utterly fail in their efforts to do good on a ship. Many, alas! not only fail under such circumstances, they lose the all too feeble spiritual life they once possessed, and are ruined before they step ashore. It was not so with William Threlfall. A man of God on shore, he was about his Master's business at sea, conducting public service on Sundays, and during the week, when the weather permitted, and generally deporting himself as a Christian should. And to him was given the joy of seeing fruit. One of his fellow voyagers was reclaimed from infidelity, whilst it is believed that others among the passengers and crew were converted to God. So passed days, and weeks, and months, until, on the 4th of April, 1822—a little over eighty-seven years ago—after a three months' voyage, Capetown was reached, Mr. Threlfall being nearly twenty-three years of age.

The imaginative reader may picture to himself the Rev. B. Shaw and the Rev. T. L. Hodgson meeting the young minister at the "Old South Wharf,"* on the shores of Table Bay, and afterwards wending their way up Buitenkant Street to the Mission house in Barrack Street. Our illustration shows the house in which Mr. Threlfall was entertained, and the stoep on which he sat. The Capetown of those days was differ-

* Mr. Samuel Tonkin, one of the oldest inhabitants of Capetown, informs the writer that the "Old South Wharf" was a high structure on piles, slightly to the south of Buitenkant Street. The docks were not opened until the 11th July, 1870. The sight of the Bay, which was sometimes full of sailing vessels, presented a beautiful picture as seen from the shore, or from the slopes of Table Mountain.

ent in many ways from the Capetown of to-day, but the grand old mountain was the same. The silence of the neighbourhood was, as it had been for centuries, undisturbed by the shrill whistle of the locomotive, or the whir of the electric car, but lazy oxen, led by dirty Native children crept in and out from the country, and were outspanned even in Adderley Street—then the Heerengracht—down which a stream of water about twelve feet wide, fringed with fir trees, rippled merrily from the mountain to the sea. No one was in a hurry in the quaint old Dutch Capetown of those days. Its whitewashed houses, with their spacious stoeps and trellis vines, were suggestive of repose, and the thing that was not done one day might very well wait until the next, for there was no weekly English mail to attend to, and no regular post.

The Rev. Barnabas Shaw seems from the first to have been very favourably impressed with Mr. Threlfall; for, years after, he wrote in his "Memorials of South Africa": "I never saw a young man so interested for the souls of the heathen. On landing at the Cape and beholding our school, in which were children of all colours, he was quite delighted, and could not refrain from tears, but wept for joy." This was characteristic of the man whose love for the heathen was so great that "he expressed a wish that he was black, or that he could make himself so, that he might go among the Natives of the country without being liable to the suspicion of being influenced by sinister or worldly views." And it should be remarked that better acquaintance with the aborigines of South Africa did not quell the young missionary's ardour; for the above wish was expressed after intimate knowledge of the heathen.

After a sojourn in Capetown, extending over a period of from five to six weeks, Mr. Threlfall left for Algoa Bay, it having been determined by the Committee in London that he should labour for a time under the Rev. William Shaw in the Albany District. Taking ship, he reached Algoa Bay, after a stormy passage, on May 28th. Tarrying there for a few days, he proceeded by ox wagon to

join the Rev. William Shaw at Salem, where he arrived on June 6th —his twenty-third birthday—a warm welcome being extended to him at the Mission house, where he was soon made to feel at home.

He laboured for a time among the scattered immigrants of Albany and Caffraria, and had the joy of seeing many turn unto the Lord.

Riding from Salem, a distance of a hundred miles, he preached, morning and evening, apparently for the first time, at Somerset East, on September 1st, 1822. On the following day, Mr. Hart having offered him a horse, he determined to visit Brother Broadbent, at Graaff-Reinet.

CHAPTER III.

An Unexpected Meeting.

In the introductory chapter of Mr. Broadbent's book, a graphic picture is presented of the author's first interview with Mr. Threlfall on the occasion referred to. Incidentally, Mr. Broadbent tells us of a severe personal affliction which had compelled him to leave Griquatown and return to the Colony for medical assistance. He testifies, with gratitude, to the kindness extended to him at that time by the Rev. A. Faure, minister of the Dutch Reformed Church at Graaff-Reinet. That good man, hearing of his affliction, met Mr. Broadbent's wagon some distance from town. After Christian salutations, he expressed the deepest sympathy with the sufferer, adverting upon the "wisdom and goodness of Divine Providence," and directed the driver to proceed to his yard. He then invited the missionary, with his wife and family, to become his guests. The invitation being accepted, they were tenderly cared for by Mrs. Faure, at the Dutch Reformed Parsonage, for three whole months, until Mr. Faure, having received a call to Capetown, was about to remove thither with his family.

Mr. Broadbent then convalescent was living in a small house badly furnished, when one day a stranger bronzed with the sun and travel-stained rode up to his door, enquiring whether Mr. Broadbent resided there. An answer being given in the affirmative, he dismounted and entered the humble cottage.

Soon Mr. Broadbent stood before him, when the stranger, seeing at a glance that he still bore the marks of his recent illness, said, respectfully: "Sir, having heard of your affliction, I have taken the liberty of calling upon you, to see whether I can be of any service to you or your family. I am returning to Grahamstown, and shall be glad if I can execute any commission for you there."

There was a frankness in the young man's appearance, and a kindliness in his manner which impressed the sensitive spirit of the missionary. So thanking him, he said:

"I pray you be seated, and allow me to attend to your horses."

"No," said the stranger, "I have no other business in the place, and would rather not stay."

Mr. Broadbent, thinking of the poor accommodation he had to offer, and perceiving that his visitor was no ordinary man, begged to be excused for a few moments, when, leaving the young man with his wife and two little boys, he managed, with the assistance of a stick, to cross the road to the dwelling of his host, the Rev. Mr. Faure, who had not yet departed for Capetown.

"I am so sorry to trouble you," said the missionary, "but a young Englishman has called to see me, evidently a gentleman; one of the immigrants, I think. Would you be so kind as to invite him to dinner?"

"It will afford me the greatest pleasure," said Mr. Faure, "and I am sure Mrs. Faure will be delighted to entertain your new-found acquaintance. We do not see a stranger here every day."

Mr. Broadbent returned to his cottage, leaning heavily on his stick, when, finding his visitor in lively conversation with Mrs. Broadbent and the children, he said:

"I cannot urge you to accept of our hospitality, situated as we are; but my good friend, Mr. Faure, the Dutch Reformed minister, sends his compliments, and hopes for the favour of your company to dinner. As I am to be one of the party, I hope you will not refuse."

"I am exceedingly obliged to you and your friend," said the young man.

Then there was a pause, Mr. Broadbent wondering why the stranger had not given his name, and yet not caring to ask a personal question.

At length he remarked, breaking the awkward silence:

"You said you were returning to Grahamstown. No doubt you know the Rev. William Shaw?"

"Yes," said the young man, dryly, "I know him."

Then, after another pause, Mr. Broadbent said: "I understand that a young minister has recently arrived from England—a—Mr. Threlfall. Do you happen to know *him*?"

The eyes of the two men met, and the secret was out!

Mr. Broadbent, seizing the young man's right hand in both his own, exclaimed: "Is this, then, Brother Threlfall? Why did you not tell us? Surely, you would not have gone away without letting us know!"

The stranger, at once, throwing off all reserve, became a friend. He remained for a week as Mr. Broadbent's guest, and the two missionaries had delightful intercourse.

The incident is interesting, because it throws into strong relief the courtesy and unselfishness, the sensitiveness and reserve, the sympathy and brotherliness, not unmixed with humour, of the young missionary. We can well imagine that Mr. and Mrs. Broadbent, with a small family, having taken up their temporary abode in a little cottage, poorly furnished (which probably means that it was scarcely furnished at all), were in no state to press their hospitality upon a stranger. The young man's quick eye took all in at a glance, and his first impulse, undoubtedly, was to give as little trouble as possible, whilst he rendered all the service that lay in his power. He had not quite made up his mind what he would do, but, in a moment he determined that his visit should not embarrass the afflicted minister and his family.

There are not many young men who would so have deported themselves, and have given evidence in an equal degree, of the "heart at leisure from itself, to soothe and sympathise," after a long, tiring ride of two hundred miles—one hundred to his appointment, and another to visit a minister in his affliction. Mr. Threlfall's own account of his journey from Somerset East to Graaff-Reinet, and meeting with the Rev. Samuel and Mrs. Broadbent, is given by him in a few laconic sentences in his journal, under date, September 3rd, 1822: "Proceeded on Mr. Peacock's horse, leaving the

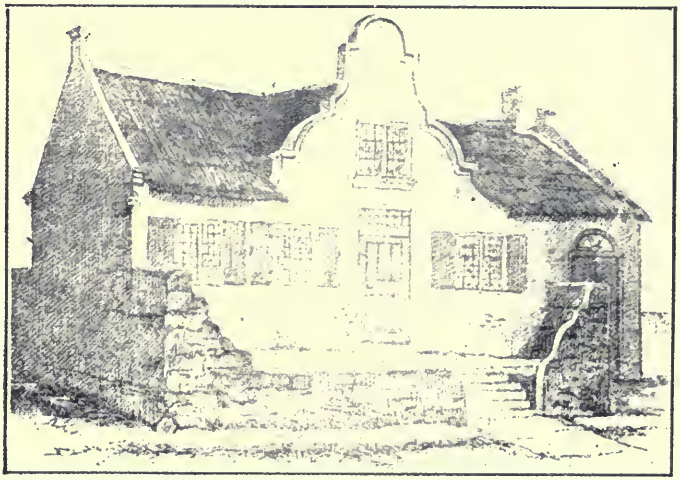
other behind me; arrived at Graaff-Reinet about noon; was kindly received, both by Mr. and Mrs. Broadbent and the Rev. A. Faure. I am very much astonished at Mr. Faure's kindness to our brethren." As the happy days spent with Mr. and Mrs. Broadbent passed away, the weather turned "wet and very cold," but the young missionary applied himself to the Dutch language under the kindly tuition of his host, and so improved the time.

A few days later he bids his new friends adieu, and starts on his long and perilous homeward journey. From the 7th to the 10th we find him at the house of Mrs. Hart, at Somerset East, and his journal testifies to the kindness he received at that good lady's hands; for, he writes: "Mrs. Hart is a good mother." On the 8th he preached morning and evening; on the 9th he was detained by the rain, and on the 10th he "was waiting for the roads to dry," but he preached in the evening; and when on the 11th he was fairly started on his homeward journey, he met three men, who told him there was a lion in the way; "but," he says, "in directing me to avoid him, they set me in the path where he was said to have been seen." On the following day he lost his horse, and his anxiety for its safety was not lessened when he learnt that the lions worried two horses and an ox the night before. The horse, however, was found before sunset, and Mr. Threlfall arrived at Grahamstown on the 13th.

Passing over several entries in the journal, in which Mr. Threlfall expresses his gratitude to God for affliction, believing that it had done him good, we find an entry dated January 1st, 1823: "Salem Chapel was dedicated to the worship of God." A meeting of Leaders seems to have been held in the early morning, after which the Rev. Mr. Baker preached in the forenoon. In the afternoon a love feast was held, "and public service was again conducted in the evening by Mr. Kay." Then followed the Covenant Service and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It must have been a blessed New Year's Day that was thus spent in the worship and service of God, and it is not difficult

to imagine the delight with which the simple worshippers of those times crowded into their new chapel. "The collections," we are told, "amounted to about one hundred rix-dollars" (£7 10s.).

During Mr. Threlfall's short sojourn in Albany and Caffraria, he showed himself as courageous in enduring the perils of the veld as he was zealous in the Master's service. He tells in his journal how on one occasion he was lost during the night in the Kareka bush. Tying his horse to the underwood, he climbed a tree and peered into the darkness, endeavouring, if possible, to discover a way out. In this position he continued, lightly clad—whilst the wind began to blow cold—until near midnight. Having sung several hymns and prayed, apparently to the great uneasiness of his horse below, whose natural instincts prompted it to remain as still as possible, he composed himself to sleep, but was awakened by the rain at about 2 a.m. His garments were wet, but his horse was still safe and quiet, though the lion and the leopard were abroad. After eating an orange, he tried to sleep again, when the little bough upon which he rested his weary head, gave way, and looking at his watch, he saw it was 4 a.m. It was still raining, though not heavily. So passed the long hours, relieved only by the strange sounds of the African night, until, with the dawn came his release. Mounting his patient though tired and hungry steed, he had but to "give it rein" to discover that he was only a short distance from the road, and not very far from home. He was received at the Mission house in the morning with more than ordinary affection by Mr. and Mrs. Shaw; nor is it difficult to imagine how the affection of the older missionary and his wife manifested itself on that occasion. The hot coffee, the warm bath, and the comfortable bed which were doubtless provided, would be welcome indeed. It was a trying experience, but typical of much which the early missionaries had to endure.



The Old Mission House, Capetown, in which
Mr. Threlfall was entertained.

CHAPTER IV.

Delagoa Bay.

The call soon came to leave the hardships and perils of the Albany District for the yet greater privations and dangers of Delagoa Bay. This was to introduce Mr. Threlfall to his first experience of a deadly climate, but as it took him nearer to Madagascar, he cheerfully responded, believing himself to be divinely led. The circumstances which led to this call are related by Mr. Broadbent as follows: "The British Government had sent out an expedition,* consisting of H.M. Frigate, the *Lieven*, commanded by the Hon. Captain Owen, R.N., accompanied by a smaller vessel, called the *Baracouta*, to survey the East Coast of Africa, and the coast of Madagascar, in the channel of Mozambique; and likewise to collect information on every branch of science which the occasion might serve. The officers and scientific gentlemen of that expedition were wisely selected, and well qualified for the duties assigned them." It appears that in the month of May the *Lieven* called at Simon's Bay, having come from the Mozambique channel, and being about to return thither to continue the survey. The officer in command, evidently an earnest Christian, offered a free passage in his vessel to a missionary who might be found willing to volunteer to labour amongst the barbarous tribes of the insalubrious coast of Delagoa Bay. It was scarcely to be expected that Mr. Threlfall could resist such an offer as this, and, hazardous though the enterprise undoubtedly was, he regarded it as an open door. Accordingly, we find him leaving Capetown (where he had arrived some time before) for Simon's Bay, and embarking in the *Lieven* on June 21st, 1823.

* *Vide* Commodore Owen's Vols.

In a letter to the Missionary Committtee in London, the Rev. William Shaw writes:—

"Brother Threlfall has . . . . counted the cost. The cheerfulness with which he left us to face every danger and difficulty, showed that he was just getting into his proper element. The confidence which he expressed in the various promises of God in reference to the heathen, and his relying on the ninety-first Psalm, as being a part of his portion, showed his whole soul to be engaged in the work before him."

Of the voyage to Delagoa Bay, no record seems to have been kept. Mr. Threlfall, however, tells us that he arrived in English River, Delagoa Bay, on the 22nd of July.

On the following day he was introduced to Mayetta, Chief of the Kingdom of Temby, who, with several of his Chiefs, boarded the *Lieven*. They all expressed their pleasure at the young missionary's arrival, and it was arranged that, for the present, he should reside at Stengelly, it being one of the healthiest places, and near the ship, in which was Mr. Threlfall's luggage. Going on shore with the Chiefs, he was escorted to the village of Stengelly, which was situated on the banks of the river, and the hut which it was to be his privilege to occupy, was pointed out. It had neither chimney nor window, and for furniture it contained "a few spears, two shields, and a rush basket." The friendliness, or otherwise, of the Chiefs towards the missionary, or of the missionary towards the Chiefs, could only be conjectured, for neither could speak the other's language. Asked for a fire, they brought a bedstead, which, Mr. Threlfall facetiously observes "was quite as useful." Soon a fire was lighted in the middle of the hut, and a meal, consisting of a living fowl, and a little rice in the husk, was provided for the missionary. It was the Natives' way of showing such kindness as they were able. In a little while the repast was prepared, and served smoking hot; it was dressed in the Native manner, and very dirty. Some twenty or more men, women and children crowded into the tiny Mission house, singing and clapping their hands

and as Mr. Threlfall essayed to do justice to the generous, if uninviting repast which had been provided, he could see their dusky faces through the smoke, which attempted in vain to escape from the hut. It was a weird picture. Yet the welcome which these poor heathen extended to the ambassador of the Cross, must have been touching in the extreme.

As we contemplate the hero of this story, under such circumstances, we think of the words of Carlyle as peculiarly applicable to him :

"O much-enslaved world,—this man is not a slave with thee! None of thy promotions is necessary for him. His place is with the stars of Heaven: to thee it may be momentous, to thee it may be life or death, to him it is indifferent whether thou place him in the lowest hut, or forty feet higher at the top of thy stupendous high tower, while here on Earth. The joys of Earth that are precious, they depend not on thee and thy promotions. . . . He wants none of thy rewards; behold also, he fears none of thy penalties. Thou canst not answer ever by killing him: the case of Anaxarchus thou canst kill; but the self of Anaxarchus, the word or act of Anaxarchus, in no wise whatever. To this man death is not a bug-bear; to this man life is already as earnest and awful, and beautiful and terrible, as death." *

The Natives of Delagoa Bay struck Mr. Threlfall as being a fine race, but he observed that many of them were suffering from leprosy. They seem, in some respects, to have reached a higher stage of civilization than that of the Namaquas to whom the Rev. Barnabas Shaw first preached the Gospel; for on Mr. Threlfall's arrival they were cultivating the soil, which was fertile, and producing various cereals such as maize and rice, as well as a variety of roots. But they were improvident, and consequently poor. The young missionary, however, nothing daunted, had his luggage removed from the *Lieven* to the hut which the Native chiefs had kindly placed at his disposal. He had evidently come to stay; for, in addition to the luggage, there were

* Carlyle: *Past and Present*, p. 249.

brought to the humble Mission house two barrels of provisions for his consumption, the one containing brown sea-biscuits, and the other rice. For fresh meat Mr. Threlfall shot wild ducks, and he tells us that one generally served him two days. He was evidently not a sportsman, or he kept the sporting instinct well under control, for he writes:—"I never shoot for pleasure; when I have obtained one bird I return to my dwelling." Soon he turned his attention to gardening with the object of securing supplies, after his provisions were exhausted. He was unable at first to commence his Mission, as he had no interpreter, but he gave himself to the study of the Native language, and added every day a few words to his vocabulary. And so the days passed, the missionary washing his own clothes and cooking his own food, the biscuits in the barrel becoming fewer and the rice becoming less.

It was winter, the days were short, and we can well imagine when Mr. Threlfall tells us, he "felt a little solitary" that he must have been very lonely indeed, for he was aware that he was about five hundred miles from the nearest missionary. He knew the Natives were treacherous, and that they had murdered some Portuguese who, a few years before, had come to settle among them; yet even when the darkness closed around him, as he lay night after night upon his solitary couch, he felt no fear. He seems at once to have adapted himself to his new surroundings, for after he had been but little more than a month at Delagoa Bay, he writes: "I do not think that I was ever in my life situated more to my mind than at present. I have but few conveniences of a temporal kind, and am sometimes tempted to think that I shall suffer want; but I am happy. The Lord has given me favour in the eyes of the people. I now desire a knowledge of the language: then I would fly everywhere, and preach the everlasting Gospel."

A few days after this entry was made in the journal, we find Mr. Threlfall boarding the *Jane* and being rowed up the Mapoota river, about thirty miles from the bay, to interview Makazane, one of the Native kings. The river was swarming with hippopotami. Hundreds were seen, a dozen or more being sometimes round the boat. The young missionary improved the time in writing sentences of the language,

and it is gratifying to know that he was able to converse with the rowers on religious subjects. They manifested their pleasure by clapping their hands. After about three days had been spent on the river and in visiting the numerous villages, Mr. Threlfall set off with two guides on the morning of September 11th to visit King Makazane. They travelled on foot for about twelve miles, passing many populous villages, until they came to the King's residence, which was surrounded by trees. His majesty, together with some of his wives, was seated on a mat in the presence of about thirty Natives. Mr. Threlfall having saluted him, the King showed his pleasure by extending his royal hand, and drawing his visitor towards him in a very friendly manner. The object of the visit was then explained. The missionary had brought no presents, but he showed the King his pocket Bible and Hymn Book, which were much admired. Then refreshment was provided for the three, consisting of rice and fowl and "a kind of spruce-beer." The kindness and courtesy of his majesty were much appreciated. Mr. Threlfall found these people living in great spiritual darkness. Asked "Who is God?" one who had lived with the Portuguese nearly all his life, answered "The rain!" "I read and prayed," writes the missionary, "and taught the people to kneel before the Lord."

Two days seem to have been spent in this neighbourhood, during which Mr. Threlfall "saw several of the Bratwah nation" whose splendid physique greatly impressed him, for he says: "They are the finest men I ever beheld." Learning that the name of their king was "Tshaka," and that he lived not far away—only some three days' journey—Mr. Threlfall sent his respects, and was assured that his majesty would be glad to see him. On the 13th he took his leave of King Makazane and of the Bratwahs and returned, a distance of thirteen or fourteen miles, to the trading tent, apparently retracing his steps to the river. He observed that the country, generally, was well watered and cultivated, carrying good timber, in some parts, and thickly populated. Counting the houses situated close to the path as he walked along, he found there were no fewer than four hundred and five, and that they stood in clusters of from fifty to sixty together. This is of

interest to us to-day because it shows that Mr. Threlfall had not only the missionary spirit, but the traveller's instincts. For aught he knew, a long career of usefulness lay before him at Delagoa Bay, and he determined, from the first, to make the most of his opportunities,—to master the language, to acquire by close observation a knowledge of the country, and to cultivate friendly relations with the people, especially with the Native chiefs, to whom he was always ready to pay his respects. Providence surely, had marked out this young man for a long and successful missionary career. He seemed to possess all the qualifications of a Christian missionary—the unselfishness, the enthusiasm, the adaptability, the love of the Native and, above all, the loyalty to Christ without which no missionary can ever hope to succeed in the highest sense.

In a little while Mr. Threlfall returned to the coast and on the 30th of September he started from his hut, early in the morning, taking with him two Natives to mark out the land which Mayette, the chief before mentioned, who was the first to meet him on the ship, had granted to the Missionary Society. Then follows an ominous record in the journal: "I found my journey very fatiguing. The sun was hot, and I could get no refreshment. Hungry, thirsty and faint, I was taken with a violent headache, and left my work unfinished, being obliged to return to my hut. In a short time I was in a high fever, and became insensible to everything but pain. I think in about six or eight days the fever abated, and I wrote a note to *anybody* on board the English vessels in the river to come and see me." A report afterwards reached Capetown that the note here referred to by Mr. Threlfall was to the following effect: "Pray, sir, do come on shore and bury me; for I died last night."

If Mr. Threlfall really wrote so, and there seems no reason to doubt it, it shows that he was in a state of high delirium. The sympathies of the reader will go out towards the solitary missionary, even to-day, as he pictures him thus prostrate with fever, lying apparently dying in his comfortless hut.

CHAPTER V.

The World and the Church.

The fever from which Mr. Threlfall suffered appears to have been of a very malignant nature. It seems that Captain J. L. Church, of the *Orange Grove*, responding to the missionary's strangely incoherent but piteous appeal for assistance, arrived at the hut one evening and prepared some medicine, which Mr. Threlfall believed was the means of saving his life. At all events, he felt strong enough, a fortnight after he had contracted the fever, to visit the vessels lying at anchor in the river, and to walk several miles to the Portuguese Fort for the purpose of calling upon the Governor and others. He tells us how, on this occasion, he stayed overnight with Tiexero, a native of Goa, and how, while he read and prayed morning and evening in his bedroom, Tiexero joined him in his devotions. For a fortnight or so, though still unwell, and complaining of loss of spirits, he seems to have recovered a little, but during this period his servant left him, doubtless wondering why the missionary's God allowed him to suffer. And so the burden of household cares was added to that of missionary labours—which he had never ceased to pursue, as his strength would permit—and we find him milking his sheep and doing the menial work connected with his humble abode. Thus did grace triumph over the languor which fever induces. It was not long, however, before Mr. Threlfall suffered from a return of the terrible malady, and for a time no entries were made in the journal. Prostrated by fever, suffering from a violent headache, the solitary inmate of his comfortless hut, having not even a native servant as nurse, he rolled on his mattress night and day; yet, miracle of grace, his mind was clear and vigorous. "I had such views of Christ," he says, "as I seldom had before.

He was . . . . more desirable than when I first sought Him. He was my only hope. Nothing that I had ever said, done, or suffered in His cause, nor my present willingness to suffer, could give me any comfort; no, not the least. All, without Christ, appeared less than nothing. He was my Refuge, my All in All. My languid eye looked to Him, and I thought of the words of the dying founder of Methodism:

"'I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me.'"

In the weak and emaciated condition above described, yet not despairing of ultimate recovery, Mr. Threlfall managed, on October 30th, to crawl on board the *Orange Grove*, after having suffered from fever, more or less, for fully a month. He was anxious to secure medical aid, and to get away, if possible, from the coast to the mountains in order that he might recover strength.* It was his intention to improve the time on the *Orange Grove*, and he had hopes of holding service on the following Sunday (November 2nd). When the day of rest came, however, he was not able to do this.

Two days later the *Andromache*, a British frigate of war, under Commodore ——, cast anchor in the river. This seemed a providence, and the sick man was justified, surely, in thinking he would receive the assistance he so much required. How that assistance was denied him, Mr. Threlfall relates in a long letter, in which many details of his illness and the circumstances connected therewith, are given. He tells how he struggled on shore for a time with the fever, acting upon such medical advice as the Master of the *Orange Grove* was able to give him; how he tried to attend to the Mission, and resolved not to leave the Station until he was sent for; and how, at last, his servant having left him, and having no strength to cook for himself, he determined to leave the Bay, by the *Orange Grove*, and try the effect of a few weeks at sea. He relates how he got on board with a few of his boxes, hoping the vessel would put to

* He afterwards saw that this was impossible, and desired to go to sea.

sea in a few days, and how, while he waited, the fever instead of abating, continued to increase, until the arrival of the *Andromache,* under Commodore ——. It appears that Mr. ——, a Capetown merchant, and brother of the Commodore, was on board the frigate. He was the reputed owner of the *Orange Grove,* and was visiting the Bay for business purposes. Always careful to observe the amenities of society, Mr. Threlfall wrote a note to the Commodore, explaining his condition, and apologising for his inability to pay the usual call. That officer, however, did not deign at that time to visit the missionary, but after a day or two the assistant-surgeon of the ship was sent to see him. As the result of this consultation, he was put on "another regimen," and his medicine was changed. This brought no improvement, but was followed by increasing weakness and pain, until the condition of the sufferer was such that he could not get into his bed. Being advised to get to sea as soon as possible, himself anxious to do so, and hearing that the *Orange Grove* was not likely to sail for some time, he turned, naturally, for help to the two Englishmen whom Providence seemed to have placed in his way.

And now a drama is enacted before us, in which the chief actors are the Commodore of a British frigate of war, brave but godless; and an African trader, selfish and mercenary, whose object was to exploit rather than to elevate the heathen.

These two on the one side, and Mr. Threlfall on the other, exhibit, at once, much of the best and the worst of which human nature is capable; and the attitude of the brothers towards the missionary is typical of the antagonism which has always existed between the world and the Church.

It is not difficult to picture what took place after the *Andromache* cast anchor at Delagoa Bay, on the occasion referred to.

As the brothers, bronzed and burly, sipped their wine and smoked their cigars and shuffled their cards in the state cabin, the conversation turned upon the condition of the sick man on the *Orange Grove.*

"So there is a missionary on your boat, down with fever, very ill apparently?"

"Serve him right. What does he want here, anyway?"

"Been up the river, I hear, visiting several of the Native Chiefs. Lived in a hut, as long as he was able, until the very niggers left him; and now, forsooth, he has the effrontery to appeal to us! Would like a sea voyage."

"And you are the man who will be fool enough to accommodate him."

"Not I, indeed."

"But what can we do with the fellow. I am determined that he shall not remain on the *Orange Grove*. Don't see how he can expect it. Besides, if he were better he would do our business no good. Spoil the Natives, and all that sort of thing. Make business impossible."

"Put him ashore, that is the simplest solution of the difficulty. What becomes of him afterwards is not our business. If men will be such fools as to live as he's been living, and do as he's been doing, they must take the consequences."

* * * * * * * * *

It was not long before the Commodore and his brother visited the *Orange Grove,* for the purpose of disposing of the sick man. The latter was ordered on deck, and his appearance as he staggered towards the brothers, with blanched cheek and sunken eye, the wreck of his former self, must have excited pity in the breast of all save those in whom that virtue was dead. The Commodore, however, showed no pity, but addressed Mr. Threlfall in a very rough manner, somewhat as follows:—

"I understand you want to go to sea, but you need not entertain the idea of sailing by the frigate, for that is out of the question."

"Very well," said the missionary, "then I must remain where I am."

"No," said the brother of the Commodore, "that you cannot do. I do not know where the schooner is going; you cannot go in the frigate, and you cannot go in this vessel. What are you for doing? You must make up your mind."

No other course being open to Mr. Threlfall but to get ashore, as best he could, he dragged his weary body back to the cabin, and managed, with great difficulty, to get his few things together.

In the evening he was taken ashore and left, at his own request, on the Portuguese side of the river. It appears that Tiexero, the native of Goa, with whom Mr. Threlfall had previously spent a night after visiting the Portuguese Governor at the Fort (and who, the reader will remember, had joined the missionary in his devotions) had offered him his house and other accommodation, and Mr. Threlfall intended to put his sincerity to the test.

To the everlasting credit of Tiexero it must be recorded that the door of his dwelling was opened wide to receive the missionary. And so, it came to pass, that when those who called themselves Englishmen and Christians, refused him shelter in the hour of his deepest need, a Native took him in. But not only did Tiexero receive Mr. Threlfall into his house—showing him such kindness and attention as he was able—when he failed to find an asylum either on board the frigate or the schooner, the Portuguese Governor seems also to have felt the touch of nature which makes all the world akin, to which the sick man's compatriots were so strangely insensible; for His Excellency determined that Mr. Threlfall should never want for anything while he was among them, that his wardrobe and store should be open to him, and his only regret was that his office precluded him from making one who was an Englishman and of another religion, his daily companion. Liberty was, however, given to the missionary, to preach the Gospel to the soldiers, and to the Natives, or otherwise to instruct them. What such kindness must have meant to the sick man at such a time, we can only faintly imagine; for the limit of human endurance must have been well nigh reached, as weak, disappointed, and with that strange feeling at the heart which the victims of cruelty and injustice know alas! too well, he cast himself upon Tiexero's hospitality.

As the Commodore, and his brother, the owner of the *Orange Grove*, watched Mr. Threlfall taken ashore, they, no doubt, congratulated

themselves upon having disposed, as they thought, of a very awkward piece of business. But they had only disposed of it until it was to meet them again. They had missed an opportunity, such as might never again present itself of placing the Lord Jesus Christ—let it be said with reverence—under an obligation—of rendering one of His needy followers a service, which He would have regarded as done unto Himself, and have remembered, after it had been forgotten by them,—aye, and acknowledged in the midst of an assembled universe.

But that opportunity, unimproved by them was embraced by others, whom they despised. And one of those others was a foreigner and the other a Native. The attitude of both these men towards the missionary is typical of the generosity often displayed by the foreigner to the ambassador of Christ, and of the unfailing kindness of the Native towards the minister of the Gospel.

If God cannot work through us He will work through others. This has been exemplified again and again in the history of both individuals and nations. Those two shrewd and prosperous men of the world made a mistake that day (to say nothing of the crime that was committed) which showed, despite their boasted foresight, that their outlook upon life was as lacking in perspective as it was in sympathy. They might have done the best bit of business they had ever transacted in their lives. They were there to do it, and Providence had placed it in their way, giving them the first chance. But their sordid past prevented them. They did not know that God's search light was turned upon them; that their characters, revealed in a flash, were photographed, and that they themselves would be remembered by future generations only for their inhuman conduct towards a suffering child of God.

And the business they disposed of so lightly, the account they would not settle, will be presented for payment to them again some day; and, as Carlyle says, they will have to settle it, "neatly, completely, as sure as they are alive"; settle it with compound interest too, in something far more costly than a little trouble or a little money. For, quoting the terrible words of Carlyle again,

"Do you think there is no payment but in money? There is a payment which Nature rigorously exacts of men, and also of Nations, and this I think when her wrath is sternest, in the shape of dooming you to possess money.

"To possess it: to have your bloated vanities fostered into monstrosity by it, your foul passions blown into explosion by it, your heart and perhaps your very stomach ruined with intoxication by it: your poor life and all its manful activities stunned into frenzy and comatose sleep by it,—in one word, as the old Prophets said, your soul forever lost by it. Your soul; so that, through the Eternities, *you* shall have no soul, or manful trace of ever having had a soul; but only, for certain fleeting moments, shall have had a moneybag, and have given soul and heart and (frightfuller still) stomach itself in fatal exchange for the same. You wretched mortal stumbling about in a God's Temple, and thinking it a brutal Cookery-shop! Nature, when her scorn of a slave is divinest, and blazes like the blinding lightning against his slavehood, often enough flings him a bag of money, silently saying: 'That: Away: thy doom is that!'" *

Yes, it is these outstanding accounts, not settled in this life, which demand a future life, proclaiming as with a thousand tongues that there must be a day of Judgment—a day from the decisions of which there will be no appeal; a day in which right and not might shall triumph, in which virtue and not vice shall be crowned in the sight of angels and of men.

But what was Mr. Threlfall's attitude towards all this trouble? In the letter to which reference has just been made, he concludes the harrowing description of his sufferings on this occasion, by an expression of Christian experience which shows that beneath the external circumstances of his life, which, trying though they were, had caused but a ripple on the surface, there was a deep calm, a settled peace, which

* Latter Day Pamphlets.

neither the devil nor his agents could disturb—"the peace of God which passeth all understanding." Peace amid the storm—"My peace," which the Saviour promised to His disciples. The following quotation breathes of this:

> "Since I wrote you last I have had my eye fixed on the Saviour, and my soul was ravished. At present I have not those clear views of His excellencies which I had; but He is mine. *I thank God for everything,—even my last trial.* I have thought of making my will, as I possess a little property; but I think my friends will know what to do with it: they know where my best wishes lie,—with the Heathen! O, the millions of heathen that are perishing! O, what shall we do to diffuse more widely the healing balm of the Gospel? We want power. We want language. We want everything. Help me by your prayers. If I get better I hope I can spend a few months at the (Portuguese) factory with profit. The Heathen are numerous, and just the same people as the Tembians. I may never see you again in the flesh; and you may hear from me no more: I hope I shall see you and all my brethren in heaven. If I die here, I dare say the Portuguese will keep my property, which is not much. Don't be alarmed about me, or by any means think of acting otherwise than as if I were in health."

Mr. Threlfall seems to have been as great a favourite with the Portuguese at Delagoa Bay as he was with the Natives, though it must have required much effort to enable him to rise above the terrible depression which the fever induced. He himself confesses in his journal that he felt timorous, unstable, distrustful, cowardly. The molehill was a mountain, and the feather a ton. Men who so feel do not usually impress others favourably, but Mr. Threlfall managed to influence for good Portuguese and Natives alike, and to inspire in both a wholesome respect for himself.

Once during his residence at the Bay his friendly offices were successfully used, at no little personal risk, to prevent a rising of the

Natives against the Portuguese. The former, incensed against the latter because of the slave trade cruelly pursued by them for more than two hundred years, had determined to take their revenge. And a bitter revenge it would have been had not Mr. Threlfall interposed. He was at the Portuguese factory at the time the insurrection was contemplated, and though the repeated attacks of malaria from which he suffered had so reduced his strength that he was scarcely able to stand, he acted as mediator between the contending parties. The Natives appear actually to have blockaded the Portuguese Fort, when Mr. Threlfall offered his personal services and secured a treaty of peace. But their hand was only stayed for a time, for when Commodore Owen, of H. M. S. *Lieven* called, after the missionary's departure, he found that "very few inhabitants were left, and the country was strewed with human bones."

MISSIONARY VETERANS.

Rev. H. Tindall. Rev. J. Thomas. Rev. W. Barber. Rev J. Priestley.

Rev. R. Ridgill. Rev. E. Edwards. Rev. S. Hardey. Rev. P. Batchelor. Rev J. A. Bailie.

Photo. kindly presented by Mrs. Tindall.

CHAPTER VI.

A Perilous Voyage and a Friend in Need.

Five months appear to have elapsed, after Mr. Threlfall was compelled to leave the *Orange Grove* before it was possible for him to leave Delagoa Bay, and during those months he had repeated attacks of fever (malaria) followed by "the flux," which threatened to drain away his life. The nature of the fever, and the frequent relapses, extending over a period of so many months, should be noted in view of what is to follow.

It was probably in the month of February that the good ship *Nereid*, a South Sea whaler, called at Delagoa Bay for fresh water and vegetables. She seems to have left again on or about the 21st of March. Mr. Threlfall was still very ill, and as he entertained no hope of recovery while he remained in that deadly climate, he hired two Native boys as servants, and prevailed on the captain of the *Nereid* to allow him to embark on his ship, it being understood that he was to be landed on the first inhabited shore that was sighted after the vessel had put to sea. He considered "this was likely to be Port Natal, on the south of Delagoa Bay, or St. Augustine's Bay, Madagascar"! The thoughts of the sick man still turned towards that much-coveted shore, and it seemed for a time as though the *Nereid* were destined to land him there. For, he writes: "The wind favouring a sail for the latter place, we stood for it; and I began to think I was on the eve of having my once ardent wishes gratified by being providentially put ashore on the island which first excited my missionary feelings." But it was not to be. For when they were about a hundred and fifty miles from Madagascar, the crew were smitten by "the epidemic fatal to so many on the East coast," and the captain "put about," and steered for the Cape of Good Hope. He did this for

two reasons; first, that his sick might be restored; and, secondly, that he might obtain other seamen.

In a letter which Mr. Threlfall afterwards wrote to his parents, he gives a graphic description of this terrible voyage. He tells how, out of a crew of thirty, thirteen, including the first and third mates, succumbed to the epidemic, and how, over those thirteen he read the funeral service, sometimes solemnly committing two together to the mighty deep. Nor was this all. The captain became sick and delirious, and as the second mate was no navigator, Mr. Threlfall, despite his condition, had himself to "manage the ship." Fortunately the weather favoured the sorely-stricken mariners. For though they had thunder-storms and tempests, the wind bore them towards their desired haven, until, "at length, the vessel was seen from the signal-post on the little hill near Capetown, called the Lion's Rump." It was observed from the shore "that she was not managed, but was drifting before the wind, and must, of course, become a wreck if not manned." Assistance was accordingly sent, and in a little while the *Nereid* was boarded and brought to anchor in Table Bay at some distance from the other vessels.

Soon a notice was posted at the Exchange:—

> "Ship *Nereid,* South Sea whaler, arrived in Table Bay in distress. Twenty days at sea, from Delagoa Bay; called there for water; caught the fever; took the Rev. W. Threlfall on board sick. All hands down. Ship unmanageable; lost fifteen hands* on the passage, among whom are the first and third mates. The captain is delirious, and the Reverend gentleman dying. Seen at sea in distress and brought into port." †

It may be thought that what has just been related goes far towards justifying the conduct of the owner of the *Orange Grove* and the

* Mr. Threlfall in a letter to his parents, gives the number lost as thirteen.

† The *Nereid* arrived in Table Bay on the 12th of April, 1821. Theal's "Records of South Eastern Africa," vol. ix.

Commodore of the *Andromache* in not allowing Mr. Threlfall to remain on the schooner and in denying him a passage on the frigate. It must be evident, however, that whilst the fever from which the crew of the *Nereid* suffered was the same as that which Mr. Threlfall had contracted, his presence on the vessel in no way accounted for the outbreak of the epidemic. Let the fact be remembered that water was taken in at Delagoa Bay, and there need not be a moment's doubt as to how the crew of the *Nereid* came to be smitten. The Rev. Barnabas Shaw says: "It was ascertained that every individual who had been on shore had caught the fever, and before night the crew were unable to work the vessel. The helm was tied a-lee, and she was committed, under God, to the mercy of the winds and waves."

Mr. Threlfall never suggests (nor does it seem to have been suggested by anybody else) that his presence caused the fatal sickness, and he would have been the first to do so had there been the slightest reason for such a suspicion. It is evident, on the contrary, that with the full knowledge of what afterwards occurred, he did not exonerate the selfish brothers at whose hands he had been so cruelly treated; and it is equally evident that Mr. Broadbent, who wrote many years afterwards, was of opinion that their conduct was reprehensible in the extreme.

No little excitement was caused in Capetown by the arrival of the *Nereid*. The notice posted at the Exchange was read again and again. Every line, nay, every word, was full of grim significance. Like the despatch of a general from a battlefield, after a reverse or a defeat, it told in the fewest possible words of terrible disaster.

What was the nature of the plague? Would it spread? Was not Capetown in danger? These, and similar questions were asked by the men, women and children who assembled on the shore; and to them the *Nereid* appeared, as she lay quietly at anchor in Table Bay, like a thing of ill-omen.

The Rev. James Whitworth was at that time in Capetown, waiting to join Mr. Threlfall at Delagoa Bay. From the *Missionary Notices*

for January, 1824, we cull the following extract which shows the importance that was attached to the Mission Mr. Threlfall had endeavoured to establish at Delagoa Bay: "The new Stations in South Africa, to which Providence has lately directed the brethren, appear, without design, to have brought a very extensive and populous part of the eastern country within the range of Missionary operations. The Kaffir Mission, which has been entered upon by Mr. W. Shaw; the Bechuana Mission, conducted by Messrs. Hodgson and Broadbent; and the Delagoa Bay Mission, where Mr. Threlfall is now employed, and to which Mr. Whitworth has just sailed, will form three important points, at a great distance from the operations of other Missionary Societies, from which, should the divine blessing attend the work, a chain of Mission Stations may be in future drawn, so as to bring the numerous tribes of this large portion of the continent from the eastern coast, considerably in the interior, into the fo'd of Christ." The extract is interesting to-day, showing, as it does, that "the Committee" were endeavouring to carry out a policy.

But if the policy of the Committee appeared for the moment to be thwarted, the providence of God seemed certainly to have ordained that William Threlfall and James Whitworth should meet in Table Bay. It so happened that between the two missionaries there was no ordinary bond of affection. Their joint names had been discussed in connection with Madagascar, and they seem to have been provisionally designated by the Committee for work in that is'and. James Whitworth was one of the last to bid Mr. Threlfall farewell at Ramsgate harbour, and the subject of their conversation, on that occasion, was Madagascar. The deep interest of Mr. Whitworth in that Mission was evinced by the fact that he had given £50 towards its maintenance. In mentioning this, Mr. Threlfall says: "I love him with all my heart."

Surely it was more than a coincidence that Mr. Whitworth was in Capetown when the *Nereid*, with Mr. Threlfall on board, dying, so the notice said, cast anchor in Table Bay.

It appears that the Harbour-Master despatched a messenger to Mr. Whitworth, advising him of the arrival of the fever-stricken vessel,

and of the condition of the missionary on board. The reader may imagine the haste with which he made his way to the Exchange and the eagerness with which he scanned the notice. He learned, with a feeling akin to dismay, that by an order from the Colonial Secretary's Office, all communication with the *Nereid* was prohibited, unless special permission had been granted by the authorities.

The leisurely way in which things were done in those days is shown by the fact that on the following morning the Port Master himself found time to deliver a letter to Mr. Whitworth. It was addressed to "Whoever might be at the Mission House," and read as follows:—

"Dear Brothers and Sisters,—

"Here I am in the midst of death, in dying circumstances, but happy in God, and going to glory. Farewell! Let us meet in Heaven. —W. T."

Mr. Whitworth's first idea was to engage a surgeon for his sick friend, and he had no difficulty in securing the professional services of Dr. Roberts. He then sought permission at the Colonial Secretary's Office for the doctor to go on board the *Nereid*. This was readily granted, but the conditions imposed rendered his visit impossible. They were, that he was not to return as long as the vessel remained in quarantine. The young missionary, however, and his wife, nothing daunted, held a consultation, and the two came to a noble resolve. Duty must be done at whatever cost. Mr. Whitworth, with the full consent and concurrence of his wife, would go himself to the *Nereid*, and render such assistance as he was able to his sick friend.

What happened after this is graphically related in the following letter:—

> "I petitioned to go myself," says Mr. Whitworth, "on that condition, which was granted. I was not a perfect stranger to West-Indian fevers. I had a good supply of medicines, and of the best medical works, supplied by a surgeon in Capetown. So,

in the name of my God, I went on board to save the life of my friend, if possible, or lose my own in the attempt.

"As I leaped on board, and entered his cabin suddenly, his emaciated frame could scarcely endure the shock, and I feared he would faint in my arms. As soon as he was composed, and we had prayed, I saw the first object was to cleanse and purify the ship; but there was not a sailor who could give me the least assistance. The two Native boys [however] were my helpers. I showed them how to bale water, to clean the cabin, etc.; and they worked with all their might. I then got into the hold, and found some casks of tobacco, which I . . . burnt freely in every cabin in the ship's hold, and on deck. I shall not describe my medical treatment of poor Threlfall. Suffice it to say, that I believe it was the only mode that could have saved his life. So said also a surgeon, to whom afterwards I described it.*

"The result of these sanitary measures, and this medical treatment of the sick, was, that by the blessing of God, the plague was stayed. Mr. Threlfall, the captain, and all the remainder of the crew began to recover. The period of quarantine was shortened; and in thirty days we all landed, free from disease, convalescent, and praising God."

In a letter afterwards written by Mr. Threlfall to his parents, he gratefully acknowledges the kindness of Mr. Whitworth on this occasion. "He came," he says, "as you would have come to a dying child, full of parental affection and compassion. He was my loving father, physician, kind nurse and humble servant, as well as a minis-

* It appears that on the first day after Mr. Whitworth boarded the *Nereid*, Mr. Threlfall, supposing he was dying made a last request as follows:

"I wish you to write to my father, and tell him that I do not regret having come to Africa; and that I entreat him to set apart that portion of his property which he intended for me,— first for the education of those two boys, to prepare them to become assistants in the Mission, and the remainder to the Missionary Society."

It was on the same occasion that he expressed the wish before referred to, that he was black, that he might have more influence with the heathen.

tering angel sent by God. To him and to my Heavenly Father I owe a debt of gratitude I can never pay."

Good Dr. Roberts attended Mr. Threlfall when he got ashore, but he was anything but robust, and felt every atmospheric change to such an extent that he likens himself to "an animated weather-glass." Soon, however, he was able to walk for a few miles, and to sit on horseback for a considerable time, without much fatigue.

In the same letter, referred to above, Mr. Threlfall writes of his Christian experience during the period of more than ordinary trial through which he had passed. We give this at length, because it reveals the character of the man:

> "Well, my dear parents, I tell you that, during the last nine months, I have been dangerously afflicted, and have sometimes felt much bodily pain; yet I thank God for the dispensation. His abundant mercy toward me has far more than made up for deprivation of health and ease. Never was I more satisfied and happy than I have been, and now am. O! how shall I tell you of the faithfulness of God and His goodness to me?
>
> "It is more than I can express or conceive. He has kept my mind in perfect peace, and has done for me far more abundantly than I am able to ask or think. I have been, and still am, living on the verge of real heaven, and have frequently felt a joyful desire to depart. Death, though my last enemy, has no depressing effect on my mind. As I have rejoiced in past perils, I go triumphantly to meet my future foes. My way is clear, my victory is sure. I know in whom I have believed—JESUS CHRIST, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. I rest on a rock, and defy every storm. Though in the fire of trial,—with faith in Christ, and [having] the promises of the Word of God, and a real experience, like that of the Hebrew children,—I cannot be burned. I find it even so; and you, my dear parents, may know it also. May God bless you, and yours, for ever! I have often thought of you in my affliction, and shed

some tears of tender affection for you, thinking that when you would hear of my dying at Delagoa Bay, secluded from Christian society, you would be perp'exed in your minds, and mourn for me, as those who have no hope. At present, you may be sure nothing will be wanting to make me comfortable, recovering or dying. I am under the eye of my affectionate fellow-labourers, who are to me as brethren, sisters and parents.

"Give my best love and wishes to all my relatives, and let them know that it is well with William, their nephew, or cousin, because God is his portion; and tell my other friends that I live in converse with the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

"Your unworthy

"WILLIAM."

The reader will remember that two Native boys accompanied Mr. Threlfall on the *Nereid*. It was from them that Mr. Whitworth received assistance to cleanse the ship. Mr. Threlfall had brought them from Delagoa Bay, with the object of training them as interpreters for the Mission; and, on going ashore, he took the precaution, so necessary in those days of slavery, of introducing them to the Colonial Secretary, and of obtaining certificates indicating that they were British subjects and free men. More than this, he sent them, at his own expense, to a school in Capetown, where they remained for several years. It is interesting to find that in the General Report of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, the name of Threlfall appears under special contributions as follows:—

"Threlfall, Messrs. L. and R., and Friends; towards the education of two African youths at the Cape, 1823-1828, £119 12s."

Of the history of these young men nothing is known, save that one of them embraced the Christian faith and was baptized, receiving the name of "Ransom Threlfall."

CHAPTER VII.

On the Way to Kamiesberg.

Mr. Threlfall remained in Capetown for several months, but though he was well nursed and had the best medical advice that could be procured, his recovery was so slow that at times he despaired of ever being well again. It was not long, however, before the Rev. Barnabas Shaw, who was then stationed at Kamiesberg, invited him to become his guest, and in a letter written from Capetown, July, 1824, the invitation was accepted. Mr. Threlfall travelled over-land to Kamiesberg, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Shaw. It is not unlikely that Mr. Shaw on this occasion accomplished the double object of replenishing his stores and of providing transit for his young friend. The distance to be covered between the Kamiesberg and Capetown was great, the return journey being 670 miles.* The oxen travelled slowly—very slowly, and the wagons moved heavily, often in the night, through the deep sand or over the all but trackless desert. Mr. and Mrs. Shaw left Capetown, in the early morning of October 2nd, 1824, and their first "out-span" was at Salt River, where they were joined by Brother Hodgson who was about to proceed to the Bechuana country. "Shortly after our arrival," writes Mr. Shaw in the *Missionary Notices* for 1824, "Brother Lynch came up on horseback, and was present at our morning service. Before we had concluded, Brother Snowdall made his appearance, being on his way from Stellenbosch to the Cape. Orders were then given to bring the bullocks and put them to yoke, which work being accomplished, we separated from each other, perhaps to meet no more

* From information kindly supplied at the Surveyor-General's office, we learn that the above is to-day the exact distance by road from Capetown to Lilyfontein. It was probably considerably more in the old days when roads were little better than a track over the open veld.

in this vale of tears: yet we know that 'He that goeth forth weeping bearing precious seed, shall come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him.'" *

For some reason or other Mr. Threlfall did not join Mr. and Mrs. Shaw until two days after they left Capetown. It seems more than likely that he followed them on horseback, and that this arrangement was kindly made by Mr. Shaw to shorten, what proved to the young missionary, who was still far from well, a long and tedious journey. On October 4th, 1824, Mr. Shaw writes as follows: "We were joined by Brother Threlfall who is to accompany us to the Camies Mountains, hoping that his health may thereby be improved. He is much better than he was some time ago, though quite unfit for labour. We desire to bow to the Divine Majesty, but still would pray that he would spare useful lives."†

The party travelled by easy stages *via* Malmesbury to Piquetberg, thence the long toilsome journey through the Zandveld was made. The scenery on the banks of the Olifants River would be much enjoyed, and Mr. Shaw doubtless pointed out the very spot where, the Chief of the Little Namaquas and his party, six in number, all riding on ox-back, met Mrs. Shaw and himself. The date, the time and the place of this remarkable occurrence had been duly recorded. It was on October 4th, 1816, ‡—just eight years before Mr. Threlfall travelled over the same ground—about eight o'clock in the evening. The Namaquas, having heard something of the Gospel, were on their way to Capetown in search of a missionary. There were many roads converging towards the same place, and to Mr. Shaw it seemed providential that they should have taken the one which brought them face to face with himself; for had

* It is interesting to learn that nearly twenty years after this meeting of the brethren at Salt River, the Rev. Benjamin and Mrs. Ridsdale, the Rev. Joseph and Mrs. Tindall, with their son Henry—"an agreeable youth of about twelve years of age," started from Capetown by ox wagon for Great Namaqualand *via* Kamiesberg,—that their first "outspan" was at Salt River, where they boiled the kettle and sat down upon the grass. Several of the brethren from Capetown accompanied them, when a hymn having been sung, and prayer offered, they took their leave, the Missionaries turning towards the wilderness and their brethren towards the town.

† Missionary Notices, 1824. ‡ Missionary Notices, Vol I, 1876.

they taken any other they would have missed him. And that meeting had resulted in the establishment of the Kamiesberg Mission and had caused Mr. and Mrs. Shaw to settle on the south side of the Orange River, instead of pursuing their journey to Great Namaqualand as they had originally intended. No doubt Mr. Shaw told Mr. Threlfall, how the six Namaquas joined them on that occasion in their devotions, how while Brother Schmelen of the London Missionary Society spoke of the Good Shepherd, the Namaqua Chief wept much, and how, during prayer, he lay with his head bowed upon the ground!

On the 17th of October, 1824, just thirteen days after Mr. Threlfall had joined Mr and Mrs. Shaw, the party were met at the Olifants River by a number of the Mission people with a relay of oxen to assist them on their journey. But the river was to be crossed. It was full, and there was no bridge in those days. How it was accomplished Mr. Shaw tells us in a brief sentence:

"Toiled hard the whole day, as the river was full, and we were constrained to unload our wagons, and take them to pieces in order to cross the water with a small boat." *

Soon after the Olifants River was crossed, the journey through the desert began; and the country between the Olifants River and the

* Here we cannot forbear relating how the Orange River was crossed by some of our brave Missionaries and their wives in the old days. Sometimes it was very low and easily forded, but at other times it was so full that the traveller was obliged to tarry for weeks on its banks unless he made use of such primitive means of crossing as the Natives employed. They simply cut down a number of willow trees which grew on the banks of the river, and after lopping off the branches, lashed them together forming a rough raft, the size of which varied according to requirements. A couple of long poles were attached like the shafts of a cart, and the native swimmers seizing these poles with one hand, swam with the other, and thus dragged the raft across. The oxen of course, were compelled to swim over. They were forced into the stream by means of vigorous whipping, but once in the water they usually managed to reach the opposite bank of the river, though, of course, there were accidents at times.

About nineteen years after Mr. Threlfall crossed the Olifants River in a small boat with Mr. and Mrs. Shaw, after taking their wagons to pieces as above described, three Missionaries crossed the Orange on a raft. The late Rev. Henry Tindall, a boy of twelve years of age, was one of the party. Mrs. Ridsdale, then a young woman, crossed on the same occasion, and by the same primitive means. It was night when the raft bore its precious freight on the bosom of the "Gariep" (the native name for the Orange River). A fire kindled on each bank of the river lit up the weird scene.

northern border of the Kamiesberg Mission Station is desert indeed. A sandy, treeless, waterless waste, it presents a scene of utter desolation. It would be difficult to imagine anything more like the conception one has formed of chaos. The names of the watering places, even to-day, sufficiently indicate the nature of this part of Little Namaqualand—Salt River—Bitter Pits—Stinkfontein. As the thirsty animals pursue their journey over the arid plains, they can find no better waters than these with which to quench their burning thirst, unless perchance it rains, which is not often; for this is all but a rainless belt of country. But even this part of the journey is not without its compensations; for the road here, for the most part, is flat, and soon the peaks of the Kamiesberg afford the first glimpse of the "promised land" beyond the desert!

As Mr. Threlfall arrived at Lilyfountain on the 24th October, many of the flowers for which Namaqualand is noted were probably still in bloom; and the contrast between the desert and the Mission reserve must have been as surprising as it was delightful. The party would perhaps be the better part of two days in climbing the mountains; but though the ascent was exciting and perilous, the writer, having frequently travelled over the same ground, can imagine the exhilaration which Mr. Threlfall, especially, must have experienced. For the atmosphere of the Kamiesberg is clear, bracing and dry, and the mountains, dark and majestic, seem literally to cleave the deep blue sky. The very dust of the country is clean, being pulverised granite, and the roads everywhere, from July until October, are fringed with flowers which extend, here and there, even to the feet of the oxen. So plentiful, so various in hue and rich in colour are they, that they may be seen miles away. The sweet grass is as abundant as the lush bush. Even horses over twenty years of age renew their youth in good years, casting their shaggy hair for coats that shine like gold. At such times the Kamiesberg, with its acres of heath and flowers, is a paradise—a land, for a few brief months at least, in which the music of flowing water is heard in ancient river beds, and stock, small and great, drink and drink again from limpid brooks.

On October 24th, 1824, Mr. Shaw writes as follows:

"Were met this afternoon by several of the Namaquas, who had come to attend us to the place of our residence." *

The descendants of these very people met the writer of this sketch and his wife, under similar circumstances some years ago. It was our first sight of the Namaquas. They presented their greetings to the "New Mynheer and Missis," as best they could, and then retired. From our coign of vantage on the wagon we watched them sitting round their camp fire upon the open veld, drinking their coffee and eating their sodden bread newly baked upon the ashes, the firelight revealing their rugged faces whilst all around was dark, and upon us and them the silent stars looked down.

There can be little doubt that Mr. Threlfall beheld a similar scene, and that the romance of the situation appealed powerfully to him.

"It was dark," Mr. Shaw writes, "before we reached the mountain top, yet a company of females who had collected together by the main-road leading to the Institution, saluted us on passing by with a hymn of praise. [This appears to have been a second salutation.] After repeated greetings from persons of all ages we joined in prayer and thanksgiving and retired to rest." †

It is impossible for those who for years together have never been far from the "madding crowd" to realise the pleasure which the visit of Mr. Threlfall would afford to Mr. and Mrs. Shaw. For the Kamiesberg missionary, then as now, lived a lonely life. On a Mission reserve of about 400,000 acres, he was and still is, the only European. All else were, as they are to-day, Natives, within that area. And notwithstanding the grandeur of the country, there came—as there doubtless still comes—to the missionary and his wife a feeling of sadness, occasioned, in part, by the consideration that its great natural beauties were beheld by so few who really appreciated them. The flowers were simply regarded as veld, and valued or despised as they were good or

* Missionary Notices, 1824 † Ibid, 1824.

bad for large or small stock; while the mountains which caused the missionary and his wife to feel that they were in Nature's temple, where they could adore and worship, produced no such effect upon the Namaquas. The silence, too, of the place which at first seemed restful, at last became oppressive, and as the mind turned in upon itself the lonely ones yearned, with a longing which is not to be described, for the sights and sounds, and above all for the intercourse, which civilization affords.

The Mission house at Lilyfountain has been graphically described by the Rev. George Robson, a former missionary at Kamiesberg, and as it had much in common with that in which Mr. Threlfall was entertained, such as mud floors, mat ceilings and rough whitewashed walls, the present house only differing from former ones in that it is larger, we make no apology to our readers for reprinting Mr. Robson's article.

> Mr. Robson writes: Thanks, Mr. Editor, for the picture you have given us of the dear old mission house at Lilyfountain. The sight of it saves me the trouble of trying to describe it in fitting, architectural terminology. One sees at a glance that the building plans, if, indeed, there ever were any, were never submitted to the District Trust Properties' Sub-committee. But the old missionary who had the work in hand knew how to make of a house a home, for without doubt it is one of the most comfortable mission houses in the Connexion.
>
> The doors and windows are all painted green (or used to be) only and always green. Any other colour would have exposed the missionary to a charge of heterodoxy. Thanks to the old thatched roof, made of Namaqualand reeds, and often patched, the house is cool in summer and cosy in winter.
>
> The main building consists of four large rooms and a wide passage—the dining-room and spare bedroom being to the left of the hall, with the sitting-room and best bedroom to the right. By means of a lean-to at the back, you have a large kitchen, two

dark pantries that would gladden the heart of an amateur photographer, and another bed-room, where, if anywhere, a breed of "spooks" might reasonably be expected.

The passage from the hall to the pantries was indeed a work of art! You required a tallow candle to light you on your way in the daytime: and if you happened to carry your head a bit too high, a certain uncanny projection would speedily bring you to your knees, with a plate of sheep's head and trotters and all. Many a spill my poor wife had in that dreadful passage.

The kitchen? Ah, yes, but we can't get in. The new missionary having just arrived, coffee is being made, and the saying is that a real Namaqua scents coffee five miles away.

I say we can't get in just yet, for all the old women of the station have come to welcome "Mynheer en Juffrouw," and are squatting on the floor.

That coffee! How they smack their lips as they pass the basin round. "Dag! mynheer, dag! Juffrouw," and away they go back to their kraals to discuss the new minister and his wife.

Dear old "kombuis"! No bakery in Christendom gives better bread than my wife used to get from its old Dutch-oven. A batch from the dough made of Kamiesberg meal direct from the missionary's own mill and baked in that shapeless, rudely-formed cave, was worth ten times its weight of the best machine-made loaves I ever saw. But I digress. As a kitchen, it was the draughtiest, ugliest old structure you ever saw, but from a culinary point of view a place to be remembered.

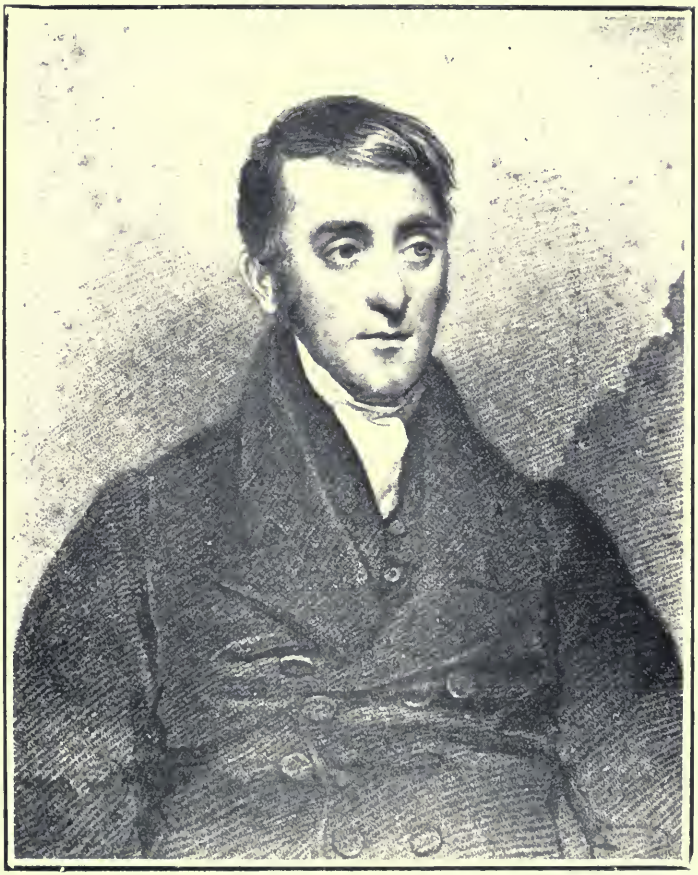
There remains yet one other part of the house I have not mentioned—the "zolder," or garret, that runs lengthwise along the building from gable to gable. A mysterious door to the right as you enter the hall leads to this upper room. Here are stored dried fruits, bags of potatoes, and corn in sacks or in bulk as the case may be. Mind the cross beams as you move about, and please tread softly, for, the ceiling being constructed of long reeds lashed together with twine, a heavy footfall will cover the

bed or dining table with dust as fine as snuff, and quite as effective. That zolder! Mind how you get downstairs, and please remember to close that freemasonic-looking door.

As already indicated, the ceiling is made of reeds thick as whipsticks and fastened together with string. These again are lashed to and supported by thick, barkless trees, taken in their rough undressed condition from the mission plantation and stretched at intervals across the building for the support of the ceiling and garret floor above. Again these heavy beams are supported in the middle by a long thick rafter, which spans the dining-room from end to end, which rafter, according to tradition, was once the mast of a ship wrecked off Hondeklip. It might have got to a worse place. I mean the rafter.

As for the floors, they were of solid mud. I say were, for I am writing of the old house as I knew it.

What floors! Our first duty was to level them up, for time and constant sweeping had left their mark in the shape of sundry holes and irregularities which made it impossible to get a four-legged table to stand straight. To me those floors were a study. Every Saturday old Jacob tidied them for Sunday by a process difficult to explain to the uninitiated. All I remember is the old paraffin tin containing certain scrapings reduced to a proper consistency and the rest I leave to the imaginative reader. Old Jacob was past master in the art of "cleaning" mud floors, and doubtless he had his reward.



The Rev. Barnabas Shaw.

CHAPTER VIII.

Impressions of Kamiesberg.

It was in such a house as this, in the company of friends with whose character and work the reader is not altogether unfamiliar, that Mr. Threlfall was to spend part, at any rate, of the next few months; and if we would enter into his spirit we must place ourselves to some extent at least in his circumstances and endeavour to realise, as best we can, the life he lived at that time.

Mr. Threlfall shall himself give us his first impressions of the Mission house and church, and other buildings which he found on his arrival at Kamiesberg. The following letter, dated January 1st, 1825, written by him to the Missionary Committee, is of especial interest, giving, as it does, many particulars concerning the Mission at that early date. If the reader will bear in mind that the Station was only eight years old when the letter was written, he will form some idea of the marvellous progress which had been made during that period. It is evident that from the first Mr. Shaw sought to create an environment for Christian influence, that he endeavoured to civilize as well as Christianize the Natives.

Mr. Threlfall writes as follows:—

"My dear Fathers and Brethren,—

"Having been recommended a change of air for the recovery of my health, I left Capetown in the beginning of October last, in company with Mr. and Mrs. Shaw, for this place. To me the journey was long and tedious; but I endured it better than was expected. We were on the road about twenty days. In my

health I have been gradually improving, though (I am) very far yet from being well. Relapses are frequent and painful; but I think I am in a fair way of recovery. Perhaps no place in Africa is more calculated to restore to health the unnerved, worn-out invalid than the salubrious air of this elevated station. I have felt nothing like it since I passed the Bay of Biscay; its very smell is British. The atmosphere is as pure and agreeable as that of Montpellier, in France, and sometimes as bracing as that of North Britain. The water is excellent and perennial; corn and fat cattle are plentiful and good, and game is abundant.

"So far as aspiring summits, solid granite, tumbling masses, frightful precipices, deep ravines, winding valleys, fissured rocks, and a distant view of the sea, form the romantic and wild, Kamiesberg partakes largely of this character. There is also a large field for botanical and mineralogical research. But there is no wood worth the name of timber; consequently the buildings are few and inferior. The Mission-houses and church are a stack of buildings about a hundred and thirty feet long by sixteen wide. Of this length the church is thirty-six feet, and stands at the west end. The other length is (occupied by) five rooms, built at different times by the missionaries. There are a few other small buildings, blacksmith's shop, mill-house, etc. Above the square of most of the buildings are lofts for corn, etc.

"Several of the people have lately begun to build themselves cottages, and three are nearly finished. This is quite a new thing among the Namaquas, and will prevent their wandering mode of living,—a thing much to be desired.

"Mr. and Mrs. Shaw and children are well; and your unworthy servant hopes to be well again, and to live devoted to God, and to the object for which he left his native land. The Lord has been very gracious to me, and saved me from ever thinking my affliction heavy. If I regret my sickness at all, it is when I look at the expense I have incurred, and see the little good I have been the means of effecting.

"In concluding, I venture to say that my heart is still warm with desire for the conversion of the heathen; and I would feel it warmer still! O, that the Lord would send a gracious rain upon His inheritance! At present I say nothing about Delagoa Bay or Madagascar. I hope both will soon be occupied. Respecting the former, I think, as I ever did, that it is not so unhealthy as St. Augustine's Bay in the latter; and that a communication with you is far more certain, as for many years back it has been visited by English and American whalers, who have filled up their cargoes and sailed directly for home. With respect to Madagascar, you have long known my opinion, and I am quite willing to go.

"WILLIAM THRELFALL."

Willing to go, after his terrible experience at Delagoa Bay! Willing to face a yet more deadly climate in obedience to the Master's call!

At Kamiesberg Mr. Threlfall's health improved rapidly. He was much in the open-air, working in the garden as well as at a new Mission house which he purposed to build for his host and hostess. Mr. and Mrs. Shaw had been kind, and Mr. Threlfall, not slow to observe how much they needed a better dwelling, determined that they should have one, though he built it with his own hands. Soon he became a favourite with the Natives, and his example as a workman, skilful and diligent, both with spade and trowel, must have had a salutary influence upon them. The management of a Station covering so large an area as the Kamiesberg Native Reserve, taxed the administrative ability of experienced missionaries—it is even a problem hard of solution to-day. Yet Mr. Threlfall, young as he was, was able to offer valuable suggestions which his brethren were not slow to adopt.

It was on the 10th January, 1825, less than three months after Mr. Threlfall's arrival, that Mr. Shaw wrote, concerning a visit of the Field Cornet, as follows:—

"This evening the Field Cornet came to our house, and delivered a message to the Chief and Overseers, according to instructions from Government. His message was to the following effect: That His Excellency the Governor had been pleased to order that all the affairs of the Wesleyan Institution, on Lilyfountain, should be under the management and direction of the Superintending Missionary, there stationed. The following particulars were specified:—

"(1) Power to receive whom he may think proper as residents.

"(2) To expel any who may be disobedient or unruly.

"(3) To give out portions of land for sowing corn and making gardens.

"(4) To erect substantial dwelling houses, which must be built on the spot, and according to the plan pointed out by the missionary."

It will thus be seen that the power vested in the missionary was great, involving, as it did, the right to receive or expel residents, to apportion land, to take the oversight of all dwellings erected, and to administer generally the affairs of a station covering an area of 400,000 acres. The responsibility of such a task was such as one man might well have shrunk from undertaking; but in the providence of God Mr. Threlfall was present to share to some extent with the older missionary, the burden of administration.

On January 17th, 1825, "a General Council" was held, at which the letter from Government, addressed to Mr. Shaw, was read.

It so happens that an old volume which survived the raid made upon the Station during the Anglo-Boer War, and which it was left for the present missionary at Lilyfountain, the Rev. W. M. Crampton, to discover, is now in our hands. The book contained at one time the "General Laws" of the Lilyfountain Institution. So the inscription says on the cover, which bears the signature of B. Shaw. The leaves, however, on

which these laws were inscribed, have been torn out; but some notes of the meeting above referred to, in the Rev. Barnabas Shaw's own handwriting, have been thought sufficiently interesting to photograph and reproduce in these pages.*

The following plan of services, made by Mr. Shaw in the year 1818,† indicates how fully the days were occupied on our Oldest Mission Station, and it is probable that, after Mr. Threlfall's arrival, when the new regulations were put in force, there was even more to do than formerly.

	Hour.	Plan.
Sunday	6 10 2 6	Prayer Meeting. Preaching. School. Preaching.
Monday... ...	9 6	School. Catechising Children.
Tuesday ...	9 6	School. Preaching.
Wednesday ...	9 6	School. Prayer Meeting.
Thursday ...	9 6	School Class of Men.
Friday	9 6	School. Preaching.
Saturday ...	6	Class of Women.

* See p. 105.

† Missionary Notices, 1818.

We are not surprised, therefore, to learn that Mr. Threlfall, during his short sojourn at Kamiesberg, assisted Mr. Shaw in every possible way. It seemed impossible for him to be unemployed, especially where there was so much to do, and in addition to gardening and building, to which we have already referred, he taught in the day school, visited the sick, dispensed medicines, and gave such advice as he was able to the Natives, who had learned to consult the missionary, not only regarding their spiritual welfare, but concerning everything that appertained to their temporal interests.

From all this it will be abundantly evident that Mr. Shaw, in common with other missionaries, was not only doing the work of his high calling as a Christian minister, but that in addition, he played an important part, though one which we fear was not sufficiently recognised, as a pioneer of civilization. His rule, it is true, was not magisterial; but it was far more effectual than the presence of several magistrates with a *posse* of police could have been at that time. And an influence of a similar nature, viz., that of moral suasion, is being exerted to-day not only on the Kamiesberg, but wherever our Mission Stations exist in South Africa and elsewhere. A fact to be remembered by Government in connection with all future legislation affecting Mission lands and Native reserves.

It was about this time that, in a letter to his brother, Mr. Threlfall made use of a simile, descriptive of his own experience, which shows how greatly he must have appreciated the Natives' marvellous faculty for figurative language. That he heard many such illustrations, at first hand, as well as from Mr. and Mrs. Shaw, is more than likely; for Barnabas Shaw delighted in them, and has placed not a few on record.

Had Mr. Threlfall drunk at the fount of Native poetry, we wonder, until he became a poet himself, when he wrote as follows?

> "I don't know how it is that I don't feel like other men in affliction and tribulation. It is not that I am a stoic; for my feelings are sometimes very acute. But, though cast down, I am

> not destroyed. Some people are as a reed in a water-course, moved by the slightest wind, but not *removed* by the most rapid over bearing torrent. I hope this is as you feel. I sympathize with you, and pray that you may all be preserved in the evil day."

In another letter, of great interest, dated June 6th, 1825, yet another trait of Mr. Threlfall's character, which now begins to assume full-orbed proportions, is revealed. Conscious of what he regarded as his idiosyncrasies, and of the irritation they must sometimes have caused, even to those who loved him best, he wrote:—

> "Since my conversion, by my stiffness and conscientious *peculiarities*, I must have often grieved you, and made you feel displeasure even unto the day I left you. If you have not felt as I conceive, you had occasion to do so; and, if I am mistaken with respect to your feelings, I must attribute it to your extraordinary and superabundant tenderness and love."

If, in a former letter, we had poetry, in this we have self-analysis. Here is a man who, standing off as it were from the ego which bulks so largely in us all, endeavours to see himself through the eyes of others. And the opinion he forms as he tries to estimate his own character, even from his mother's standpoint (for the letter referred to was written to her) a standpoint of "extraordinary and superabundant tenderness and love," is not favourable to himself. Are we not right in concluding, that we may add to the other virtues of this exemplary young man, those of deep humility and great filial affection?

CHAPTER IX.

Bushmen and Hottentots.

The reader must have discovered ere this that Mr. Threlfall was a man of an enquiring mind, quick to observe, and able to adapt himself readily to new conditions. We have seen him counting the houses as he walked along the road at Delagoa Bay, able, at the end of a ten mile journey, to tell how many he had passed, and how they were situated. He has surprised us by taking command of a sailing vessel (on an emergency), and we have wondered where his nautical knowledge was obtained. But a moment's reflection has convinced us that he had picked it up on his three months' passage to the Cape, and during subsequent voyages round the coast.

And the young missionary's sojourn on the Kamiesberg was, we may be quite sure, turned to good account; for many a long evening was doubtless spent in asking questions, not only concerning the origin of the Mission, but about every thing that could have any possible bearing upon the work.* As he looked at the people whom he saw at the Station, they presented a striking contrast in build and features to any Natives he had seen in other parts of South Africa. Their huts, too ("Matjeshuises") though circular, were of a lighter structure than those he had seen in

* It should not tax the imagination of the reader too much to suppose that many such conversations as are decribed in this and subsequent papers, actually took place during Mr. Threlfall's sojourn with the Rev. Barnabas Shaw at Kamiesberg, and if we can only realise the conditions in which the two missionaries were placed, we may listen in fancy at least to their words. 'For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," and knowing not only what was in the heart of both missionaries, but what was their ruling passion, it is not difficult to reproduce their speech. The writer may assure the reader that nothing is here overdrawn. The conversations, are, of course imaginary, but they are all founded on fact.

other parts, and seemed, perhaps, as near the primitive type of a human abode, as anything he could well imagine. Certainly, they were adapted to a people of nomadic habits, possessed of flocks and herds, who pitched their tents now here, and now there, over a very wide area. Their construction was simple enough; for upon a circular frame of bent poles cut from thorn tree branches, about fourteen feet in diameter and from seven to eight feet high in the middle of the roof—tapering towards the top, they stretched a number of reed mats, leaving an opening for a low door. The belongings of the simple inmates of these dwellers in tents, consisting of several skins, and perhaps a rough chest, in which were a few rude utensils, were in keeping with their humble abodes.

All this, and much more, Mr. Threlfall saw, but it only excited his curiosity to know more of this primitive, but kindly people among whom Mr. Shaw had been so successful in preaching the Gospel. Nor was the older missionary averse from communicating to the young man all he knew of this and kindred subjects; and the time devoted to these conversations was after the evening meal, when the toils and distractions of the day were over.

"Tell me, Mr. Shaw," said Mr. Threlfall, on one of these occasions, "something of the history of the Hottentot people. They seem totally unlike in appearance and disposition, as well as in manners and customs, any other Natives with whom I have come into contact."

"All that is known of the history of the Hottentot race may be told in a few words," said Mr. Shaw.* "The fact is, the ancestors of the tribe which has its home on this Mission reserve, as well as those of other Hottentot tribes in Great Namaqualand and elsewhere, were the first Natives of South Africa to come into close contact with our Western civilisation, and that should be borne in mind, in these days, when the Namaqua is being driven farther and farther into the desert.

* Theal favours the idea "that, at a time now far in the past, an intruding body of males of some unknown race, took to themselves consorts of Bushman blood, and from the union sprang the Hottentot tribes of South Africa."—*The Story of the Nations*, South Africa, Theal.

Often have I tried, as from the slopes of Table Mountain, I surveyed the Capetown of to-day, to conjure up a picture of what might have been seen from the same spot when Bartholomew Diaz rounded the Cape, in 1486. The Hottentots then pitched their tents in Table Valley, and their stock, large and small, browsed in what are now the streets of Capetown. Surely, if a seer, at that time, had arisen to prophesy of what we see to-day, the thing would have seemed incredible. It is hard to realise not only that the Bushmen and Hottentots were then in possession of what is now the whole of Cape Colony, but that at a still earlier period they occupied a much larger area,* and that as the numerous tribes of the Bantu family invaded the land from the North, they were driven within ever narrowing limits, until, at last, both the Bushmen and the Hottentots were threatened with extinction. There can be no doubt that but for the advent to South Africa, first of the Dutch, and then of the English, these primitive and most interesting people, of whose history prior to the coming of the European, little or nothing is known, would soon have been extinct. There are very few Bushmen left now, and had not the providence of God intervened on behalf of the Namaquas, there would, I am afraid, have been as few Hottentots."

"Ah, the Bushmen," said Mr. Threlfall, "they have a peculiar interest and even fascination for me; and as their present home is on the borders of this Station, the Namaquas must know a good deal about them."

"They do," said Mr. Shaw, "but they are singularly reticent, and a Namaqua seldom volunteers information. Even when you ask him a direct question you must not always expect a direct answer. I asked one the other day how much corn a neighbour of his had sown, and his answer was, 'Sir, I do not know.' 'Has he sown two muids?' I enquired. An emphatic 'No,' was the answer. 'Has he sown one?' Still the same reply. 'Has he sown half a muid?' 'No; he has sown about three-eighths of a sack."

* Probably all the country south of the Zambesi.

"Evasiveness is a characteristic trait of the Namaqua," continued Mr. Shaw, "and viewed from our European standpoint it certainly does not provoke our admiration. It is the outcome, however, of a long and arduous struggle for existence, and if the secretiveness of the Namaqua to-day, seems, at times, to border on deception, it should rather excite our pity than our censure. For he has had, during the centuries, to protect himself and his belongings, not only against warlike Kaffir tribes, but against marauding Bushmen, ever on the alert for his cattle or any other little property he may have possessed. And although the occasion for the excessive secretiveness of the Namaqua no longer exists to the same extent as of yore, the habit, which has been acquired by the race, remains. It is, of course, the duty of the missionary to correct this patiently and in love. But to your point. The Namaquas, undoubtedly, could tell us much about the Bushmen, and from one and another I have picked up a good deal. The other day, when travelling with one of our people, we off-saddled near a *kopje* in the neighbourhood of Karkhams. I had been preaching at an out-station the day before, which was Sunday, and had started with the sun, on my return journey to the Mission house. It was still early when we sat down on the veld to breakfast, and the morning air had sharpened the edge of appetite. The circumstances were delightful enough, and the scenery grand beyond description; but a touch of romance was added, when my Namaqua companion said, pointing to a kopje, and speaking in Dutch, 'It was there that a sanguinary struggle once took place between some of our people and certain Bushmen, who had invaded the Station for the purpose of stealing our cattle. The Bushmen were utterly defeated and pursued on that occasion, a heap of stones—*hcitsi-eibib*—was raised on the spot where the Bushman chief fell,* and the place was named the River of Blood.'"

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Shaw, "this Station has undoubtedly witnessed many depredations of that nature, and just as some of our horses travel cautiously, looking round every bush and boulder, always on the alert

* The Bushmen had properly speaking no chiefs, yet it is evident that there were some who took the lead in battle.

for the lion and the leopard, so has the Namaqua developed a faculty for evasiveness, which almost amounts to what the Dutch call *slimness.*"

"Bushmanland, as you know, is on the border of this Station. You may see it any night, through an opening in the mountains, as we walk along the ridge, with the sea to the west, and Bushmanland to the south-east. It is easily discovered in a good season by the whitish appearance of its long, waving grass, which may be seen for miles. The Namaqua has an eye for pasture, and when there is grass in Bushmanland, he always knows it. As for the Bushmen themselves, you may meet one at any time on the Station. In a few rare cases they hire themselves out as servants, and one here and there may be found working amongst the Namaquas. But if the history of the Hottentot is enveloped in mystery, that of the Bushman is even more so. Undoubtedly the Bushman has much in common with the Hottentot, but he differs from him in several essential points. To begin with, his language is so different that his speech is unintelligible to the Hottentot He differs from the Namaqua, too, in that he does not practise agriculture, and has no flocks or herds; indeed, he may be said to be without possessions."

"How, then, does he obtain a livelihood?" said Mr. Threlfall.

"He subsists entirely upon the succulent tuberous roots to be found in all parts of Namaqualand, upon indigenous fruits, the larvæ of insects, lizards and locusts—in short, upon what he can shoot or find upon the veld, or steal. He is a mighty archer, and his chief weapons are the bow and the assegai. His only companion is usually a half-wild dog. As a marksman, he aims with great precision, seldom missing; and his arrows dipped in the poison of snakes, are as the wingéd messengers of death.*

* During the writer's residence at Kamiesberg, he once saw a Bushman at the time of harvest. He had been employed by one of the Natives, who gave him in addition to his rations, a wisp of straw and allowed him to sleep in his stable at night. He did not understand a word of English, nor did we understand a word of his strange uncouth tongue He managed, however, to ask for a little "tobac" repeating the word two or three times, "tobac" "tobac." In stature he was diminutive, being about four feet, his features were coarse and repulsive, and his clothing was ragged and dirty.

"There are many superstitions and traditions connected with the Bushmen," continued Mr. Shaw. "Let me give you one from the writings of Sir. J. E. Alexander, illustrating the belief that Bushmen have the power of turning themselves into animals. Only a legend, it shows how much of the animal there is in the Bushman's nature."

"It is believed in the land that some of the Bush-people can change themselves into wolves and lions, when they like.

"Once on a time a certain Namaqua was travelling in company with a Bush-woman, carrying a child on her back They had proceeded some distance on their journey when a troupe of wild horses appeared, and the man said to the woman, 'I am hungry; I know you can turn yourself into a lion; do so now, and catch us a wild horse, that we may eat.'

"The woman answered, 'You'll be afraid.'

"'No, no,' said the man, 'I am afraid of dying of hunger, but not of you.'

"Whilst he was yet speaking, hair began to appear at the back of the woman's neck, her nails began to assume the appearance of claws, and her features altered. She put down the child.

"The man, alarmed at the change, climbed a tree close by; the woman glared at him fearfully, and, going to one side, she threw off her skin petticoat, when a perfect lion rushed out into the plain; it bounded and crept among the bushes towards the wild horses; and, springing on one of them, it fell, and the lion lapped its blood. The lion then came back to where the child was crying, and the man called from the tree, 'Enough, enough! Don't hurt me! Put off your lion's shape; I'll never ask to see this again.'

"The lion looked at him and growled. 'I'll remain here till I die,' said the man, 'if you don't become a woman again.'

"The mane and tail then began to disappear; the lion went towards the bush where the skin petticoat lay; it was slipped on, and the woman, in her proper shape, took up the child. The man descended, partook of the horse's flesh, but never again asked the woman to catch game for him." *

* Shaw's "Memorials of South Africa," p. 33.

Mr. Shaw paused, and Mr. Threlfall, who had listened with intense interest to all that had been said, enquired, "Has nothing been done to evangelise these poor people?"

"Yes, great efforts have been made by the London Missionary Society, which commenced operations amongst the Bushmen as early as 1806, when a mission was established on the Zak River by Messrs. Kicherer and Edwards. Other stations were also started on the banks of the Orange River. These missions, however, were not a success.

"It is difficult, if not impossible," said Mr. Shaw, "to establish an ordinary mission amongst the Bushmen, because of their roving habits. You see, they are always on the move; and there are never many of them together. They have no tribal unity and no chiefs, being in fact, *wilde menschen* (wild men). The Hottentots had, as you know, both chiefs and captains before the white man appeared upon the scene; and now the missionary is naturally regarded as the Chief, and the corporals, or officers of the Raad, appointed for every outstation, take the place of the captains.

"Still, notwithstanding these difficulties, an attempt was made; first by myself, and then by one of our people, to establish a mission amongst the Bushmen.

"It was during the month of November, in 1817, after things were somewhat settled at the Station, that Mrs. Shaw and myself started for Bushmanland, Peter Links accompanying us. We found the country so infested with lions, leopards, and hyenas, that it was unsafe for our oxen and horses to be at large at night. On our way we passed a place where four lions had been seen the night before. It was near sunset, and our driver cracked his whip until the surrounding rocks echoed and re-echoed again. We saw no lions that night.

"Unfortunately, we had taken too little bread for our requirements. We had some corn, but only a coffee mill, in which to grind it. A tedious process, I can assure you. Well, after we had been four days out, we saw a few Bushmen; but though Peter Links made them acquainted with the object of our visit, telling them that a white man and his wife had come over *de groote wateren* to preach the Gospel to

them, we could not induce them to come near us. They were as cautious and timid as wild animals. Small wonder after the way in which they have been treated. The next day, however, two of them very cautiously approached the wagon. Their curiosity was evidently aroused by the presence of Mrs. Shaw, who was probably the first white woman they had seen.

"We asked them several questions, and found that their ignorance was deplorable. They seemed to have no knowledge of God, or of the soul, and expressed the opinion that man was nothing more than an animal. But they were proud of their achievements as huntsmen, and one of them, a perfect Nimrod, declared that 'he had shot, with his bow and arrows, one lion, two tigers, and one hippopotamus.'

"Our mission, on that occasion, was, as far as we could judge, fruitless; but it broadened our experience, and enabled us to realise the difficulties connected with the work.*

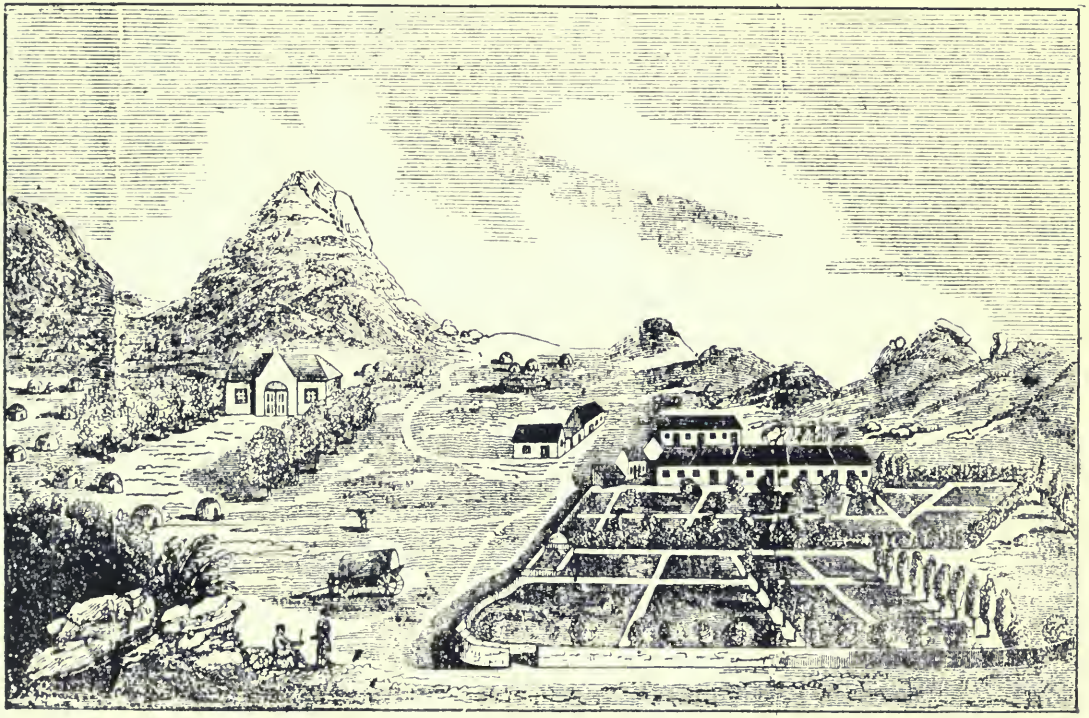
"Some time after our return, an unsuccessful attempt was made by Jacob Links to preach the Gospel to these poor people. He went and lived amongst them, following them from place to place in the desert, enduring many hardships; and it was only when he could get nothing else to eat but dried goat's skin, that he decided to return."

"Jacob Links," said Mr. Threlfall, "from all I can learn about him, is a hero."

"Yes, and a Christian," said Mr. Shaw. "One of the best, I think, the Station has produced. But I must tell you more of him on another occasion."

The Rev. Henry Tindall, in his lectures on Namaqualand, which, we may say in passing are referred to in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, is of opinion "that the Bushmen of Damaraland, and those among the Ovampo, are not strictly Bushmen, but a tribe," possibly the largest tribe of Namaquas, once numerous and powerful, which held the Ghou Damap in subjection, and was known as the "Great Mantle Tribe." He believes that these people, conquered by Cattle Damaras, the "Mationa or Bechuanas," and robbed of their cattle, were driven to adopt the habits of the Bushmen and so became a separate people, their hand against every man and every man's hand against them. The agreement of the Bushman dialect with the Hottentot, in its structure and general principles, is supposed to afford an additional proof that both peoples belonged to the same race.

* Ibid. p. 37.



Wesleyan Mission Premises, Kamiesberg, Little Namaqualand, South Africa.

From an Old Print, 1835.

Mr. Tindall's remarks on the degeneration of the Bushman of Namaqualand, coming as they do, from one who, during his long sojourn in Namaqualand, must have seen many members of that degraded race, are of the highest interest. He says: "The Bushman has evidently sunk lower and lower, until he has reached the point beyond which he probably cannot go without ceasing to be a man." "But," he adds, "he is man still. There is the spark of genius and the germ of immortality. If the turning point could be gained, and he could commence an ascent of which he is quite capable, there is no reason why he should not soon vie in intellectual power and attainments, and in moral excellence with the most renowned tribes of man."

If this be indeed true, the Bushman of Damaraland presents us at once with the most striking illustration the races afford, of man's capacity either for degeneration or improvement; and, as he quits the planet, he delivers a final message to those who remain, as big with comfort as with warning—Man may degenerate until he is little removed from the brute; but his capacity for God is not easily destroyed. "The spark of genius," all but extinguished, and the "germ of immortality," all but dead, may awake to newness of life. Yes, this may happen, "if," as Mr. Tindall remarks, "the turning point could be gained."

The gulf between such men as Barnabas Shaw and William Threlfall, on the one hand, and the most degraded of the Hottentots and the Bushmen, on the other, is both deep and broad, and the upward gradient from the former, as well as the downward gradient from the latter stretches off into infinity. But it is a gulf which may be bridged, from either side.

Concerning the Bushmen proper Theal says: "Some have supposed that they sprang originally from a Bushman stock, others that the Bushmen were simply Hottentots who became degraded by the loss of their domestic cattle, but neither of these theories is now tenable." (Theal's "South Africa," p. 3).

The reader will note that Mr. Tindall's reference is to the so-called Bushmen of Damaraland, not to Bushmen generally. Whether the Damaraland Bushman forms a distinct type from that of the ordinary Bushman, is, of course, a question for Ethnologists to decide.

CHAPTER X.

Great Namaqualand.

"Let us draw our chairs up to the fire and have another long chat. Mrs. Shaw has retired, feeling somewhat fatigued, after the work of the day—she is as busy as I am, you know, and quite as much interested in the Mission. Here is a large jug of milk, and all we have to do is to keep it warm, and drink as we feel inclined. We miss some things, on the Kamiesberg, but we have plenty of milk, and an abundance of good, wholesome bread.

"I do enjoy the evenings so, on this Station. One is interrupted a good deal during the day, but at night, I can always get from four to five hours for reading and study. No Boer ever calls here of an evening, and a Native is never seen after sunset. In some respects, both Europeans and Natives in these parts, live like animals. They are up with the sun, but as soon as he disappears, they seem to depart with him. But what shall be the subject of our conversation to-night?"

It was evening again at the Mission house, the shutters were closed, the wood fire was burning brightly in the open grate, and the tallow candles were lighted, when Mr. Shaw thus addressed Mr. Threlfall.

"Tell me," said the young man, "something about Great Namaqualand. You purposed starting a mission there when, in the providence of God, you were led to this place, and your thoughts must many a time since have turned to the regions beyond the Orange River."

"They have, indeed; and I have already visited Great Namaqualand, and hope to visit it again in the near future; for great as is our work here, I regard this Station as the base of future missionary operations, especially amongst the Namaquas. The missionary spirit has

already been kindled in the breast of some of our people, and there are men on this Station who long to preach the Gospel to their kinsmen beyond the 'great river.'"

"Have no efforts been made by the London Missionary Society to evangelise the heathen of those parts?"

"Yes; nineteen years ago, a mission was started at Warm Bath by that Society. The men sent were zealous and self-denying, and seem to have met with considerable success; but dangers and difficulties arose which compelled them to abandon the Station.*

"Then, as you know, another attempt to establish a mission was made a few years ago by Mr. Archbell, one of our own missionaries; and with that effort, we, on this Station, were very closely associated; for Jacob Links accompanied Mr. Archbell as assistant missionary. Mrs. Archbell was urged to remain here, for a time, but she would not hear of it; and Jacob, whom you rightly regard as a hero, said: 'Where Mynheer goes, I will go also.' They found the country in a very disturbed state, at that time, owing to a war, which was raging between the Bushmen and the Namaquas. The idea had, therefore, to be abandoned, and Mr. Archbell returned to Capetown.

"But in October, 1822, just two years ago, he tried again, going from Capetown on that occasion by the *Julia*, a small vessel specially chartered for the purpose, Dr. Philip, of the London Missionary Society, bearing part of the expense. Jacob Links accompanied him, as he had accompanied Mr. Archbell before. After a thorough inspection of the country, and with a full knowledge of the terrible hardships which a mission in Great Namaqualand would entail, Mr. Archbell returned to Capetown. He wrote to the Missionary Committee, pointing out the deplorable condition of the people he had seen, and signified his willingness to proceed—with a colleague—to Walvisch Bay. But as no

* "Some of the people connected with the institution abetted the cause of an enemy of the marauder, Africaner. This dreadful warrior threatened revenge, and the Station was ultimately abandoned. Africaner attacked the Namaquas, and proceeding to the Bath, carried off everything of value that he could find, and the buildings were fired by one of the party. Some of the Missionaries afterwards returned but met with so little encouragement that they finally retired." ("Lectures on Namaqualand," page 35, Rev. Henry Tindall.)

colleague was available, the Mission was suspended, and Mr. Archbell was sent to supply for a sick brother among the Bechuanas. From that day to this nothing further has been done by our Church. It should not be forgotten, however, that the London Missionary Society has not been altogether unsuccessful, for Mr. Schmelen, one of their agents—a man whom I greatly respect—has successfully conducted a mission for some years at Bethany. But there is room for many such institutions in Great Namaqualand.

"The work, as you see," continued Mr. Shaw, "is beset with peculiar difficulties, and all our efforts have hitherto been unsuccessful."

"What is the present nature of the difficulties, Mr. Shaw?" enquired Mr. Threlfall.

"Well, to begin with, the climate, though salubrious, is very trying to Europeans. When I tell you that the heat in summer is often 120° in the shade, you, who have had experience of Delagoa Bay, will realise what that means. There is little fear of fever, however, owing to the dryness of the atmosphere.

"There is, as you know, a great belt of sand, extending all along the coast from thirty to one hundred miles inland, and in summer this becomes so hot that a thermometer, if thrust into it, quickly registers 160° And when, added to this intense heat, a hot wind meets you from the Kalahari desert, as from the mouth of a furnace, you are anything but comfortable, I can tell you.

"One feels for the oxen, when travelling, and you cannot outspan when and where you will, the hot sand in some parts, and the scarcity of water in others, preventing you. The poor oxen, at times, are not able to stand on the burning sand; but, though tired, they must keep moving. Then, as regards water; as there are only eight or ten fountains in a country thirteen times as large as England, you will understand how scarce that commodity is. The Orange River is, as you may know, the only stream that flows perennially; but its bed is so low, that even *it* may be said rather to drain than to water the country."

The young missionary's interest was thoroughly aroused, and he determined to learn all he could about the country, which already began

to have a strange fascination for him. The climate, however, was a thing to be dreaded, after his experience of Delagoa Bay.

Continuing the conversation, he said: "The days must be very trying."

"Very trying, indeed," answered Mr. Shaw, "both for man and beast. Even the Native, salamander as he is, sleeps during the hottest hours, while the ostrich of the desert stands panting for breath. The vultures, however, do not seem to feel it, for in the fiercest heat, they may be seen sweeping in circles in the sky, ready to swoop upon any carrion they may discover."

"Is there, then, no relief at night?" said Mr. Threlfall.

"The nights often bring no respite from the stifling heat of the day, the thermometer not infrequently registering from 92° to 96°."

"I suppose thunder storms are frequent and severe?"

"Well, if they are not frequent, they are certainly severe. The thunder is terrific, and the lightning terrible to behold. It is accompanied sometimes by torrential rain, and sometimes by hailstones as large as marbles. Then the parched land becomes a pool, and mighty torrents, of from twenty to thirty feet wide, appear in unexpected places, literally ploughing up the rocky soil. So alarming are these storms, when they occur in the night, that the inhabitants of an entire village will rise and light their fires, to lessen to some extent the terrible glare."

"And the winters, what are they like?"

"The nights are very cold, the thermometer sometimes falling to 30°, but they are often followed by hot days, that are extremely trying."

"It is evident," said Mr. Threlfall, "that no man would think of going to Great Namaqualand for love of the climate. Yet there must be a great work in that uninviting land, awaiting the advent of the missionary."

"Undoubtedly," said Mr. Shaw, "there is."

The fire over which the two men sat being nearly extinguished in the open grate, and the tallow candles on the table burning low in their sockets, admonished the two missionaries that it was time to retire

for the night. The younger man arose, apologising for the many questions he had asked, yet hoping to renew the conversation again. The two shook hands, and soon the light, which the Natives had watched from their huts, was extinguished, and both ministers were locked in the arms of Morpheus. The older man dreamt of his projected visit to Great Namaqualand, and the younger, in the visions of the night was already far on the journey thither.

The following notes, by the late Rev. Oliver Carey, regarding the Rev. Barnabas Shaw's Mission to Great Namaqualand, will be of more than ordinary interest to readers of these pages. Mr. Carey wrote them for the METHODIST CHURCHMAN, and they were discovered amongst his papers after his death.

"Mr. Shaw never lost sight of the needs of Great Namaqualand. In a letter (evidently addressed to the Committee) dated July 3rd, 1820, he says: 'Some time ago you were informed of my intention of visiting Great Namaqualand, and the advice of the Committee was also requested in reference thereto; but, the season of the year and the state of our oxen having been taken into consideration, it was deemed imprudent for me to wait any longer for an answer. Should you think the step I have taken imprudent or premature, I cast myself on your clemency and hope for pardon.'

"Leaving Lilyfountain on March 25th, Mr. Shaw arrived at the Orange River on April 15th; and, having been assisted with oxen and people by Mr. Schmelen, he reached the Mission Station at Bethany on May 5th. After resting a few days, Mr. Shaw, accompanied by Mr. Schmelen and Mr. Kitchingham of Steinkopf, both of the London Missionary Society, set out on a journey to the different Namaqua tribes who lived to the north-east of Bethany. The mountains being impassable for wagons, and there being no horses in the land, Mr. Shaw says: 'We joyfully conformed to the usual custom of the country, and mounted our horned cattle.' As Mr. Shaw and his companions travelled they preached to the different clans they met with, until, on May 20th, they arrived at the village of Gammap where they were received with great joy. Gammap was the name of the head chief of the Great Namaquas, and it so happened that at the time of Mr. Shaw's arrival he was visited by three or four other chiefs, all of whom were desirous of being instructed in the Gospel. . . .

"During their stay the missionaries were shown every possible kindness by the people. They listened attentively to the Word spoken, and after the services some of them were seen retiring to places of seclusion to make their first attempts to pray.

"A meeting was held with the chiefs, and they expressed their eager desire to obtain teachers. Gammap said: 'We wait every day for the Word.' Nannimep, another chief, said: 'Gammap, being the head chief, will have a teacher first, but I shall come to him and will afterwards have one for myself.' Tsaumap said: 'I am hasty to have a teacher. I am afraid it will be long before one will come, for my soul is smothering in sin.'

"Having promised the chiefs that they would try to influence the Governor to grant missionaries permission to cross the boundaries of the Colony, Mr. Shaw and his companions left the village of Gammap for Bethany, publishing the glad tidings of the Gospel to all whom they met with as they journeyed. During their travels they suffered much from heat and cold, hunger and thirst, weariness and fatigue, but they found abundant cause for gratitude to God who had given them strength according to their need, and who had preserved their wives in safety during their absence. On June 2nd Mr. Shaw left Bethany to return to his home in Little Namaqualand, being accompanied by Mr. Schmelen, who was proceeding to Capetown. After exactly fourteen weeks' absence Lilyfountain was reached."

CHAPTER XI.

Namaqua Orators.

Mr. Threlfall had only been a few months at Lilyfountain, when Mr. Shaw, taking advantage of his presence on the Station, "seized the opportunity of visiting Capetown." A regular correspondence was kept up between the two missionaries during Mr. Shaw's absence, and extracts from Mr. Threlfall's letters were afterwards published. The following letter, written from Lilyfountain, Kamiesberg, March 8th, 1825, shows that when Mr. and Mrs. Shaw left the Mission house in the Station wagon, Mr. Threlfall accompanied them some distance on horse-back, and afterwards returned to the Station alone. He writes:—

> "My Dear Brother,—I cannot better let you know how we are going on here than by writing you a short journal. Well do you know where and when I left you. I got very well up the mountain and thought about David killing the lion and bear, and asked myself: 'How shall I do if assailed by so powerful an animal?' I rode on, and as the sun was gently sinking to rest, followed by the dusky shades, the feathered tribes became the subject of my thoughts, as they sported in the road before me, unconscious of harm. It appears to be the cruelty of man which makes most of the innocent creatures flee his presence. I cut off a short corner of the way by not going quite to the Veld-Cornet's house, but had nearly been lost. What dangers we expose ourselves to (thought I) when we would mend the way which leads to heaven, by attempting to do away with some of its requisitions, and not going the well-worn way of duty."

The Mission house, as has often been remarked, though situated upon the highest plateau of the Kamiesberg, 5,000 feet above the sea, is really in a valley, the view being circumscribed by the rocky, and in some parts precipitous slopes of the Kamiesberg range. But within a few hundred yards, one of the numerous ridges of the mountain affords the evening walk in which successive missionaries and their wives have most delighted. It was probably along this ridge that Mr. Threlfall rode on the occasion referred to in the above letter. Those who are familiar with the Kamiesberg will have no difficulty in conjuring up a picture of what he saw. The prospect opens out magnificently towards the west and south-east. To the west one looks down upon an undulating mass of mountain peaks, extending like huge sea waves, dark and uninviting, as far as the eye can see, and showing no intervening valleys, until they are lost, sometimes in the fleecy clouds which appear to rest upon the *onder veldt*, between the mountains and the sea, and sometimes in the sea itself, which is from thirty to forty miles away. Here the sun shines long after it has left the Mission house, and we can well believe that Mr. Threlfall delighted, as the shades of evening gathered in the deep gorges east of the Station, and crept up to the Mission house itself, to prolong the day by climbing the little eminence at the back of the Station from which this view may be obtained. There was no need, however, for him to do this on the present occasion, for as he pursued his homeward journey, after bidding farewell to Mr. and Mrs. Shaw, the wondrous panorama was spread out before him. He looked down upon the distant mountain peaks, bathed in the glory of the setting sun until that luminary dropped like a ball of fire into the sea. The deepening gloom of the east was heightened by the glory of the distant west. He saw in the fading daylight the Namaqua children filing silently back from the veld to their homes, with their little bundles of wood upon their heads; and, as his horse turned homewards, here and there the firelight flashed from the Native huts, lighting up the weird figures of the inmates. But the sight that most impressed him as he drew rein for a moment to survey the scene, with his back towards the golden west, was the eastern mountains, standing like sentinels, clad in crimson and purple and gold,

bidding adieu to the sun. As he dismounted and turned into the Mission house, the glory slowly faded from the hills, and the silent stars appeared in a sky from which the blush of day had scarce departed—fit emblems of the peace which had taken possession of his soul.

On the Sunday following Mr. and Mrs. Shaw's departure, Mr. Threlfall exhorted the people who attended the morning service to search the Scriptures, and in the afternoon "Jacob" preached from "Ask and ye shall receive," etc., Mr. Threlfall listening.

It would be interesting to know what Jacob Links said on this occasion, but though we cannot reproduce the sermon to which Mr. Threlfall listened, the Rev. Barnabas Shaw has given us in his "Memorials of South Africa," the substance of an address which Jacob delivered in the Dutch language. He was more at home in Namaqua than in Dutch, though, being Mr. Shaw's interpreter, he had a fair knowledge of English. The address is as follows:—

> "Brethren and Sisters, hear me,—I have read you the account of two blind men from Matt. xx. These men were in darkness, and could see nothing. *Broeders* (Brethren) this is our state. By nature we are blind, and know not God. We were blind to God and all spiritual things before we had the Gospel. But we are now sitting by the way, as they were.
>
> "*Broeders,* as they cried: 'Have mercy on us, have mercy on us,' so are we to cry. Some told them to be still, but they cried so much the more. We are to follow their example. If any try to hinder us, we are to continue crying to Jesus for mercy. *Broeders,* we have heard what He has done for sinners. We have heard that He will forgive sins. 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' *Broeders,* the same day that the blind men called, they received their sight, and followed Jesus. They did not remain sitting on the road, but rose and followed Christ. If we call on Him in faith, He will forgive our sins. O! how

great is the compassion of God for us (*arme zondaars*) poor sinners! 'God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son.' We have done nothing but sin against God, yet Jesus Christ died for us. He died to save us. *Broeders,* if we come believing, and with sorrow for our sin, we shall be made free, and shall obtain eternal life. Do you doubt, *broeders,* of the power of God? Behold the large mountains around you, behold the world which God has made. All these prove His power, and all speak to us; they show His power and Godhead. *Jesus neemt de zondaars aan* (Jesus receiveth sinners). If a good man promises you anything, you believe his word. So you are to believe the Gospel, and to follow Jesus. Yes, *broeders,* you are to believe and obey Him, and live as the Book says."*

Need we wonder that Mr. Threlfall was forming golden opinions of Jacob? The son of Keudo Links, a man nearly related to the Chief, he must have been quite a young man at this time, as young probably as Mr. Threlfall himself, for he was only seventeen years of age when Mr. Shaw arrived at the Station. But he was one of the first to respond to the Gospel invitation, and with the birth of his spiritual nature there came an intellectual quickening. Jacob soon became quite a student. He learned to read the New Testament, and to write, and was so much attached to his books that he carried them in a little bag everywhere he went. Speaking the Hottentot language fluently, he applied himself diligently to the study of both English and Dutch. The Rev. Barnabas Shaw writes: "I have in my possession part of a vocabulary written with his own hand, consisting of English and Dutch, in separate columns. He was also in the habit of making memoranda of discourses which he heard, several of which are now before me; and had he been spared for a few years longer, he would certainly have been one of the brightest Native lights that ever shone in South Africa."

* Shaw's "Memorials of South Africa" Page 272.

Nearly six years before Mr. Threlfall's arrival at the Kamiesberg, Jacob addressed the following communication to the Missionary Committee:—

"Africa, Leelie Fonteine, November 19, 1819.

"Unknown but Reverend Gentlemen,—The salutations which you sent I received from our beloved teachers, and wish you and the Society much peace and prosperity in the name of our Lord. I have long been desirous of writing you, concerning my former and present state, but on account of weakness in the Dutch language, I have been hindered. I hope, however, that your goodness will excuse and wink at my mistakes.

"Before I heard the Gospel, I was in gross darkness; ignorant of myself as a sinner, and knew not that I had an immortal soul; nor had I any knowledge of Him that is called Jesus. I was so stupid that when a Hottentot came to us, who prayed to the Lord, I thought he was asking his teacher for all those things of which he spoke in his prayer. Some time after this, another Namaqua came upon our place; he spoke much of sin, and also of Jesus. By means of his conversation I was very sorrowful and much affected, and knew not what to do. My mother having some leaves of an old Dutch Psalm-book, I thought if I ate them I might there find comfort. I ate the leaves up, but my sorrow was not lessened. I then got upon the roof of an old house to pray, thinking that if I were high, the Lord would hear me better; but I found no deliverance. I then ate all sorts of bitter bushes, for I thought the Lord might possibly have mercy on me. But my heaviness did not then go away. I then heard that I must give my cause over to Jesus, and tried to do so, by which I found myself much lighter. Through the word that the Lord gave our Missionary to speak, I learnt that my heart was bad, and that the precious Blood of Jesus alone cleanses from sin. Now, I found that Christ is the way and sinners' friend. I feel pity over all people who do not know God. I often feel sweetness for my

soul, while I speak about the Gospel and my own experience in the Lord."

. . . . . .

"An Unworthy Namaqua,

"JACOB LINKS."*

This is interesting as showing how much the Mission was needed, and what it did for the Namaquas within a very short time of Mr. Shaw's arrival at Lilyfountain. It also suggests that as Jacob Links was, before the Gospel was preached on the Kamiesberg, so are tens of thousands of heathen in Africa to-day, who have never heard the glad tidings of salvation. The struggles of Jacob upwards towards the light were by no means peculiar to himself. Others had similar longings. And in the dark places of the earth to which the Gospel has not even yet penetrated, the swarthy sons of Ham still stretch forth their hands.

The reader may assume that Mr. Threlfall heard many such sermons as that delivered by Jacob Links, and it may well be that after preaching on the Sunday morning, he delighted to listen to one of the Namaqua local preachers in the afternoon. The writer himself, after a serious illness, which reduced his voice to a whisper, took charge of the Station for some months in the year 1903. During that period the local preachers regularly conducted the services, and he had the privilege of listening. Many of the sermons which he heard at that time impressed him powerfully. There were eloquent Native preachers on the Kamiesberg when Mr. Threlfall visited it. One of these, Peter Links, a brother of Jacob, may be said to have ranked as an orator. There can be little doubt that Mr. Threlfall heard him again and again, and that he marvelled at his power as a preacher, as well as at the wonderful influence of the Gospel which was capable of producing such trophies of grace on a mission station that had only been established about eight years.

* Shaw's "Memorials of South Africa" Page 270.

The following address, recorded by the Rev. Barnabas Shaw in his "Memorials of South Africa," was delivered by Peter Links, in the very year that Mr. Threlfall visited the Kamiesberg.

Mr. Shaw tells us that he had preached on the morning of November 20th, 1825, from Luke xxiv., 46, 47, and that in the afternoon he requested Peter to speak in the Namaqua language. The address delivered on that occasion is graphically reported by Mr. Shaw as follows:—

> "After I had commenced the service, he rose up, and deliberately referred to the great truths they had heard in the morning, by which he gained the marked attention of his audience, when he commenced the application of them to their hearts. Almost immediately one individual began to mourn, and soon several others wept aloud. Peter went on with his discourse, till it appeared as if Sinai were on a blaze, and its thunders were rolling all around, as if the gloomy clouds were descending, and the lightning of divine justice flashing conviction into every conscience; as if the waves of divine indignation were rising, and the people just about to be swallowed up in blackness and darkness, began each to cry: 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'
>
> "Peter stood in the midst of the assembly, like the watchful pilot of a ship in the height of a storm. As the people mourned, he became more and more animated: he preached 'repentance and the remission of sins'; he pointed his hearers to the Lamb of God, and spoke of His Atonement. He spoke so delightfully of the Saviour's suffering, bleeding and dying—so appropriately of His invitation, 'Come unto Me, come unto Me'—so seasonably of his ability to save, that the storm began to abate in its fury, and he proclaimed: '*Jesus neemt de zondaars aan*' (Jesus receiveth sinners still). Jesus receiving sinners was now the theme on which he dwelt, and while he was thus preaching Christ, the clouds appeared to disperse, the thunder ceased to roar, the winds were hushed, and a peaceful calm ensued. It seemed as

> if he had brought the people within sight of the haven; when he set them to furl their sails, and they rejoiced in hope of being for ever with the Lord. The address was certainly a piece of the finest natural eloquence I had ever heard. The emotions of Peter gave pathos to his words, and the people felt that the 'power of the Lord was present to heal.'"

During Mr. Shaw's absence in Capetown it would fall again and again to Mr. Threlfall to preside over the monthly meeting of the Raad, which, then as now, was held at Lilyfountain. It was the Namaquas' Parliament, and the missionary being *ex officio* chairman, was by common consent Prime Minister, whilst the Ministry consisted of twelve Raadsmen—some of whom ranked as corporals—elected annually by the burghers of the Institution. At these gatherings the temporal affairs of the Station were discussed, and many opportunities were afforded the missionary of giving the people just such words of counsel, reproof, or encouragement as they seemed to require. In the writer's time, the minister sat at the teacher's desk in the schoolroom, the Raadsmen taking their places on his right and left, whilst the burghers sat, here and there, all over the building, some on forms and some squatting on the floor. The influence which the more intelligent of the corporals wielded in the Raad was very great; but it was invariably on the side of the missionary, and for the benefit of the people.

Mr. Shaw had considerable trouble in inducing the parents to send their children to school. From their earliest childhood they were of great service as shepherds and leaders during the ploughing season, and the school, which took them from their work, seemed, to many of the parents, of doubtful advantage. So it happened that the missionary was bitterly disappointed when, day after day, he visited the school and found it all but empty. Going to the Raad one day, he determined to unburden his mind. If the burghers would not send their children to school, he might see it to be his duty to abandon the Station, and proceed further into the interior of the country.

1825 — Jan.y 17th

A general counsel was held —
In this counsel a letter was read from Government, addressed to B. Shaw, by which he is empowered to act on this Institution, — In all cases, but the following are specified, to the Veld Cornet also —

1st To receive upon this place, any Heathens we may think proper —

2d To expel any who are disobedient to the existing Regulations of the place —

3d To give out portions of Land for sowing corn, & making gardens —

4th That every person, desirous of erecting substantial house, shall erect on the place & according to the Plan proposed by the Missionary —

5th The Field Cornet H. Engelbregt, was ordered to come to the Institution, & lay these things before the Chief — to inform him that he has no more power or influence amongst the people a giving out Land &c &c — but that this power, & influence devolves on the oldest, or Superintending Missionary

It was on such an occasion that Peter Links rose in the Raad, and addressed the assembly as follows:—

"*Brothers, hear me!* I know you of old. It is not the first time that I have heard complaints respecting the children. Many of them are watching the calves in the field instead of being in the school. Brothers, hear me! I know you often sit with only one ear open, but now open them both. I know you soon forget what you hear, and when reproved for doing wrong, you say: 'We did not know it.' Hear me, then; and to-day let your attention be fixed, for the subject is a *great one*. Brothers, let me question you. What were we before we received the Gospel? You know you were blind and stupid heathens. Brothers, what did you know of God? What of Christ Jesus? And what of the way of salvation? You knew nothing; you were in thick darkness. Brothers, let me ask again: Before you had the Gospel, what did you know of ploughing and sowing? What of making gardens, and partaking of the fruits of them? What did you know of reaping cornfields, of threshing the sheaves, of baking cakes, and of eating loaves of bread? What did you know of religious teaching, of the Holy Scriptures, and of schools for your children? You knew nothing of them; but we see great things to-day; we have our teachers, we have the great Word, and we have a school for our children.

"*Brothers, hear me!* After all these things, will you be indifferent? Will you make your children go after the lambs and the calves, instead of sending them to school? Has not the Council appointed general watchers (herders)? Is there any necessity for your children running after the calves? You know there is not. *Brothers, hear me!* Has not our teacher hinted that if we refuse to obey the light, that light may be *taken from us?* But that time must never come; we must not again be without the Gospel, without teachers to proclaim it, without Sabbath days, without the sound of the bell, and without a school for our

children. Whatever may be done to remedy the evil complained of, such a step must never be taken!

"Take the Gospel from us, and what should we be? *Brothers, hear me!* I say for myself, I say, for my part, that I had much rather that a *kogel* (bullet) should now be shot through my head, and my soul launched into eternity, than that I should live to see the day, when the Gospel shall be removed from our land."

It seems highly probable that this speech was delivered before the arrival of Mr. Threlfall at the Station. We know that it left a lasting impression upon the mind of Mr. Shaw, and there can be little doubt that Mr. Threlfall, who showed his deep interest in the school by teaching in it himself, heard the story from the lips of Barnabas Shaw.

Our object in relating these stories is, in part, to show that it was amidst such sights and scenes as have been described that Mr. Threlfall resolved himself to visit Great Namaqualand. He knew that it was Mr. Shaw's intention to make another attempt to establish a mission in that uninviting country, and that he was making preparations in Capetown with that very object in view. But why, he thought, should Mr. Shaw leave his family and the people whom he had learned to love so well? It would certainly be a work which the angels might envy him—*William Threlfall*—to take the Gospel to the tribes beyond the river, and be the means of raising up such Christians there, as Peter Links, Johannes Jager, and many others whom he saw at Lilyfountain.

Of Johannes Jager little is known save that his home was among the Karree Mountains, and that the "good news" was brought to him there by some of the Lilyfountain people who were passing. "I was living in the Karree country," he says, "ignorant of all spiritual things, and without God in the world. But Delia (wife of one of the Namaquas) came to us. She told us strange things, such as we had never before heard of, by which I was greatly alarmed. I became so terrified on account of my sins, that I fled to the rocks to hide myself. But I

could find no refuge from the frowning eye of God, which appeared to be everywhere present." Thus distressed because of his sins, Johannes resolved to go to the Mission Station—a distance of over a hundred miles—and hear the Gospel for himself. Little would the preacher on the lonely Kamiesberg think, when Johannes presented himself one Sunday at the service, that there was such a man in his congregation—one who thirsted for the Word "as the hart panteth after the water brooks." Johannes heard, and believed, and the peace of God came into his soul. A Love-feast was held after the service, in which he related his wonderful experience. The missionary went home that night with a glad heart to thank God, and to make notes of what had happened.

The conversion of Johannes led to his leaving the Karree—the barren country between Garies and Van Rhynsdorp—and making his abode on the Mission Station, where he could enjoy the means of grace. Right gladly would Mr. Shaw welcome to the Kamiesberg such a man as Johannes. He seems to have had much in common with Jacob Links, and the two became fast friends. Like Jacob, he had a thirst for knowledge. He carried his books with him to the field, and might not infrequently be seen sitting with any of the school children who were willing to instruct him. It was not long before he was able to read the Scriptures, and the Bible became his constant companion. He was a diligent workman, not merely at seed time and harvest, but all the year round. When not ploughing or reaping, he was building or following some other useful occupation. The Rev. Barnabas Shaw says: "He was a man of deep piety and fervent zeal for the glory of God."

That two such men as Jacob Links and Johannes Jager should have been chosen by Mr. Threlfall to accompany him to Great Namaqualand is surely not surprising. Johannes, we can well believe, was the silent member of the party. He would esteem it not only a privilege, but a joy to accompany Mr. Threlfall and Jacob, and if there was work to be

done—if wood was to be gathered, if a fire was to be kindled, or the oxen were to be taken to the water, or watched as they browsed on the veld, Johannes was the man to do it.

CHAPTER XII.

Leopard Stories.

Returning once again to Mr. Threlfall's diary, before proceeding with him in fancy to Great Namaqualand, we find that on the day following the Sunday on which he heard Jacob Links preach (March 14th) he was going on with the house, and receiving corn (probably seed corn to store for the burghers until the ploughing season commenced). On the 15th, the Station was thrown into no little excitement by a report which reached the Mission house, of a leopard having killed one calf and bitten another. The chief corporal quickly summoning the burghers, organised a hunt. At that time of the year there would be many burghers at Lilyfountain, for the ploughing season had not commenced. The Day School, too, would be well attended. But it is interesting to learn that it was not until the afternoon school was over that Mr. Threlfall and Jacob determined to follow the hunting party. In this simple statement we have a revelation of character. It shows that both men, before the days of Government school inspectors, and on a Station were there were few to criticise, placed duty before pleasure.

Mr. Threlfall himself records what occurred as follows:—

> "A tiger [leopard] having killed one calf, and bitten another so that it could not stand, the corporal called a party to hunt. After the afternoon's school was over, Jacob and I followed and overtook the party, about twenty, all mounted. I had understood that it was not far, but we rode towards Thorn River until we came to the waterfall. There were the remains of the first calf. We rode on, and found the other also near the river. It was bitten behind the head—its neck was horribly swelled—and it lay gasping for breath.

"We then rode to the bottom of the hill, and divided into three parties. Our party came along the road with the loose horses—we passed the place where the dead calf was, and a little further on we saw a large leopard creeping softly along the face of the mountain, as if he was afraid of being seen. The people set up a loud shout, got from their horses, off-saddled, knee-banded them, and then we set off after him, and saw him go under a great rock. I was sadly tired. We proceeded within a stone's throw of the place, and sat down, while others hallooed for the other parties, as in our party we had but one little dog and no gun. But the little dog went near the place and barked. The leopard came out, went over the top of the first height, and tried to hide himself in some bushes on the other side. The little dog and all of us ran after him until we came to a place where all the men and dogs met. They threw stones into the bush. The leopard ran out. Cobus fired, but without effect; and he got again into the same hole where the little dog first challenged him. And here both dogs and men appeared to fear; but by-and-bye, the one encouraged the other, and both were bold. The dogs went into the hole; the leopard got hold of two or three of them; he held one some time, and we thought it would have been killed. There were several crevices into the den from behind, through which three of the men fired, one after another. We listened, and the monster growled no more. A man then crept under the rock, and pulled him out by the tail. David Caffer drew out his knife, and when the dogs had done biting and the men kicking the carcase, he took off the skin, after which we got our horses and rode home."

The incident is specially interesting to the writer of this sketch because it recalls another leopard story, which serves to reveal some of the best traits of the Namaqua character. Another Links, brother of Jacob, interpreter, schoolmaster, evangelist, and pioneer missionary, was one of the principal actors in that story.

It was in the early days of our ministry at Lilyfountain, when old Barnabas Shaw Links came one morning to the Mission house to tell Mynheer of the depredations of a leopard, which had killed one of our foals, destroying, in addition, another belonging to Hendrick Beukes, the Society's farmer. Barnabas was for making short work of this leopard if Mynheer would only give him a little coffee, a little corn, a piece of meat, etc. There was every excuse for the old man asking for these articles, for the famine was sore in the land, and most of the children and old people of the Station were entirely dependent for subsistence upon what they received from the Mission house at that time.

Mynheer, being new to the work of the Mission, and as green as he was new, regarded Barnabas with some suspicion. The leopard story seemed very like a fabrication for the purpose of getting something out of the new *leeraar*. He determined, however, to trust the old man, and to run the risk, for once, of being imposed upon. Nor was his trust misplaced. Several days after the occurrence of the above incident, Barnabas presented himself again at the Mission house, having the dripping skin of a full-grown, newly-killed leopard in his hand. Mynheer, of course, wanted the skin, and was prepared to purchase it: and the old Namaqua wanted Mynheer to have it. But being too much of a gentleman to offer it as a gift, he endeavoured to make it appear that the skin really belonged to three persons. The leopard had killed one of the foals belonging to the Mission, therefore a third part of the skin already belonged to Mynheer. The Society's farmer—having also lost a foal—accompanied Barnabas on this occasion, and as the representative of the second third of the skin, which Barnabas held in his hand, he declared he could not think of charging Mynheer anything for his part. Two-thirds of the skin, therefore, already belonged to Mynheer. If Mynheer wished to purchase it the price would be three shillings and fourpence, the entire skin being valued at ten shillings, which was less than a fourth of its market value.

As, after Mr Threlfall himself, Jacob Links will justly claim the attention and excite the admiration of the readers of this story; and as

it was the writer's privilege during his ministry at Kamiesberg to know Barnabas Shaw Links (the brother of Jacob) intimately, he offers no apology for the following incidents, in which Barnabas played an important part. The recital of them will answer the double purpose of giving us an insight into the Namaqua character, and of enabling us to realise the manner of men whom Mr. Threlfall chose as his companions when he went to Great Namaqualand. That they were devout men, kindly, devoted and faithful, whom the young missionary could trust implicitly, there can be no doubt whatever.

At a Temperance meeting Barnabas could be very interesting. Asked on one occasion to deliver an address at such a meeting, he spoke of the evils of strong drink somewhat as follows: The man who took one glass of brandy was sure to want another, because the first glass would never be content to remain alone. It would have *gezelschap* (company). Therefore the man who indulged in one glass would be compelled to take two. Having done so, another difficulty arose. The two glasses began to fight, and as they were equally matched, it seemed as though the struggle would never terminate. What, then, was to be done? The only way to restore peace was to take another glass. Then there were two glasses against one, which was unfair. Obviously the right thing to do was to indulge in yet another glass to place the combatants upon equal terms. So the old man went on, and on, and on, pressing home the lesson that the man who began to drink intoxicants could not stop at a little. The *maat* (measure) of strong drink could not be taken, and it was simply impossible to estimate its evil influence.

But if the story of the leopard's skin, just cited, shows that the Namaqua can be generous, while that setting forth the evils of strong drink reveals his keen sense of humour, the incident about to be related may very well serve to illustrate his resourcefulness and kindliness of disposition in times of danger.

It was harvest time at Lilyfountain, and the corn was on the primitive threshing floor. The glebe had been ploughed that year upon the mountain, close to the Mission Station, and what proved to be a record

harvest was being joyfully garnered. The missionary and his wife, in proceeding to the harvest field in the cool of the day, were taking a short cut when the latter stumbled and fell, bruising her head and dislocating her shoulder in getting over a loose stone wall. They were alone, and the missionary, leaving the disabled one, ran for a considerable distance and shouted at the top of his voice for such Native assistance as might be at hand. The extent of the injury was, of course, not then known.

Soon a crowd of Natives gathered round the sufferer, all anxious to help. An opening was made in the wall, and she was taken back to the Mission house. Our first thought was to send for a doctor. The nearest medical man was sixty miles away, when at home, but when travelling he might be a hundred or more. It was with a feeling akin to despair that we thought of what might happen before a doctor could arrive. Some one whispered "Barnabas," and before anything could be done, the old man stood at the door of the Mission house proffering his services. He had confidence in his ability to do what was necessary, and was emphatic in his assurance that he could "put his beloved Missis right." He tried once and failed. Thinking that the arm, which was hanging limp and powerless, was broken, he put it in splints; but on the sufferer disclosing a sharp point where the shoulder should have been, he at once grasped the extent of the injury, and taking the arm in his, he never relaxed his hold until, as he pulled with one hand, supporting the sufferer with the other, snap went the joint into its socket, and the shoulder was set. The joy of that hour will never be forgotten, and it was Barnabas Shaw Links, brother of Jacob, who accompanied Mr. Threlfall to Great Namaqualand, who occasioned it. The arm, of course, could not be used for many months, but so thoroughly had Barnabas done his work, that from that day to this no other aid has been necessary, and, contrary to the doctor's expectations, the once dislocated shoulder is to-day as strong as its fellow. There were many ways in which Barnabas was useful. If a present was made of a kaross, or any other article the Namaquas can produce, it was Barnabas who suggested it—if the harness required repairs, if a whip or a crib was needed for a journey, it was Barnabas who provided for all

these things. There was nothing, in short, which Barnabas was not prepared to do for the minister and his wife, whoever they might be. He accompanied the writer on more than one occasion on a long, trying journey over the desert to Piquetberg Road, in the intense heat of summer; but not once, either then, or on any other occasion, was his even temper ruffled; not once did he forget to be what in reality he was—a courteous Christian gentleman.

It was with two Christian Natives, such as Barnabas was at his best, that Mr. Threlfall had chosen to travel, and the reader may rest assured that as he pursued his perilous journey through the inhospitable wastes of Great Namaqualand, he lacked no attention, either by night or by day, that was in their power to bestow.

CHAPTER XIII.

By the Camp Fire.

"Not a May-game is this Man's life, but a battle and a march, a warfare with principalities and powers. No idle promenade through fragrant orange-groves and green flowery spaces, waited on by the choral muses and the rosy hours; it is a stern pilgrimage through burning sandy solitudes, through regions of thick-ribbed ice. He walks among men; loves men, with inexpressible soft pity,—as they CANNOT *love him; but his soul dwells in solitude, in the uttermost parts of Creation. In green oases by the palm-tree wells, he rests a space; but anon he has to journey forward, escorted by the Terrors and the Splendours, the Archdemons and the Archangels. All Heaven, all Pandemonium are his escort. The stars keen glancing, from the Immensities, send tidings to him; the graves, silent with their dead, from the Eternities. Deep calls for him unto deep."*—Carlyle, *"Past and Present."*

Those who are acquainted with the ways of the Namaquas, will have no difficulty in picturing the animated scene which the Station presented when Mr. Threlfall, with two companions of his own choosing, left Lilyfountain for Great Namaqualand. It was a fine day in the mid-winter of June, 1825, when the three young men, each mounted on a sturdy, well-trained ox, disappeared over the brow of the hill, travelling northward in the direction of what is now known as O'okiep. The people of the entire Station were deeply interested in the self-imposed task which the three had set themselves to accomplish, and many were the prayers offered and the good wishes expressed by young and old, for a prosperous journey. The destination of the young men

was the Fish River, and the object of their journey thither was to discover whether the people of that region were still anxious for a missionary. They were expected back by the first of October, and would be in good time for the barley harvest. But as they were going to a land in which provisions were scarce, they took, in addition to their small commissariat, a little merchandise, such as beads and calico, a few tinder boxes, and other articles which they might afterwards exchange for the bare necessaries of life. Each member of the party, too, carried a gun, which might be used as occasion required, partly to procure food, such as antelopes and wild duck, with which the country abounded, and partly as a protection against wild animals. All were in good health, and the best of spirits. The buoyant mountain air, pure as the light, produced a feeling of exhilaration which is only experienced in the higher altitudes.

The state of the growing crops, the wheat, the barley and the rye, was regarded by the three young men as they rode through the corn lands with an interest which only those can understand who are wholly dependent for subsistence upon the produce of the soil. All three had left the Station on an errand of mercy, in obedience to what they regarded as a "Divine Call." For a little while, at least, Mr. Threlfall would be deprived of the friendly shelter of the thatch which the Mission house afforded, and the blazing wood fires during the long, cold winter evenings, as well as the always genial and helpful companionship of the Rev. Barnabas Shaw.* The young Namaquas, too, would miss the comforts of their more humble dwellings, and all would be content to wrap themselves in their karosses for days and weeks and months, and make their beds, in all weathers, on the open veld, beneath the silent stars. Mr. Threlfall carried a watch, but he might have done very well without it; for Jacob and Johannes could always give him a fair idea of the time, whether by night or by day. In the day they watched the shadows—shortening before noon and lengthening after—and at night the stars. How they shone in the clear air of Namaqualand,

* Mrs. Shaw was then in Capetown.

and how they spoke to the three young missionaries of the infinite space beyond which is the throne of God, as night after night they looked wonderingly into the silent sky!

The utensils they carried with them were simple enough—a kettle, a pan, and a few cups. They grilled their meat over a wood fire, and lived the simple life which is so much commended and so little practised to-day.

* * * * * * *

"What stories can you tell me about the Bushmen and the lions, Jacob? You may be considered a traveller you know. You have been several times to Capetown, have you not?"

The three young men had halted for the night. The stars were shining brightly, as they sat round their camp fire. Johannes kept a sharp eye upon the oxen, which were quietly grazing at a little distance, and rose every now and then to turn them when they seemed in danger of wandering.

"Ja, Mynheer," said Jacob, answering Mr. Threlfall.

"Then you went with Mr. Shaw into Bushmanland, and when he returned from that country, you tried to conduct a mission all by yourself?"

"I tried, Mynheer."

"You went, too, with Mr. and Mrs. Shaw into Great Namaqualand, and afterwards you were twice there with Mynheer Archbell, were you not, Jacob?"

"That is true, Mynheer."

"You must have seen a good deal, Jacob?"

"I have seen a good deal, Mynheer."

"Tell me now, Jacob, about the Bushmen and the lions. I suppose they are natural enemies?"

"No, Mynheer."

"How is that, Jacob?"

"Because, Mynheer, the Bushman often gets a large share of the *wilde dieren* (wild animals) which the lions catch."

"But how, Jacob, does he manage that?"

"In this way, Mynheer. He builds his hut near a fountain, to which the lions must come to drink, and when a lion, after drinking, returns by the way that he came, the Bushman, knowing, by long experience, that he will go back to finish his meal, follows his *spoor* until he finds him devouring his prey. Then the Bushman tries to find another hiding place, perhaps behind a rock or a bush, and having found it, he shouts 'Hi!'

"The lion stops eating and looks up. Seeing nothing, he begins to eat again, when the Bushman yells 'Hi, hi!'

"The lion stops a second time, looks all around as before, discovers nothing, and begins once more to devour. Again the Bushman cries, angrily this time, and with all his might, 'Hi, hi, hi!' The lion becomes uneasy. Fear lays hold upon him. He drops his tail, just like a dog, and runs from the direction in which the noise came.

"Then the wily Bushman, seizing his chance, takes the lion's prey.

"So do the lions help the Bushman, Mynheer; and for that reason he does not want them killed. The two work together, and have, in a way, a sort of friendly understanding. I don't know whether it is true, but it is said that the Bushman sometimes talks to the lion, using such language as this: "*Ons moet, malkander geen kwaad doen: ons arbeid op dezelfde vlakte.*' We must not do each other any harm; we work upon the same plain." *

"The Bushman is able to disguise himself, Jacob, is he not—and get very close to some animals before he shoots them. How does he manage that?"

"In this way, Mynheer. He stuffs the neck and head of an ostrich, and pads his body, which is short and thick, sticking in ostrich feathers, and making his legs white with chalk until he looks just like an ostrich. Then he approaches very near to the flock and shoots."

"And is he very like an ostrich, Jacob?"

* For much of this information we are indebted to Ridsdale's "Scenes in Great Namaqualand."

"Very like an ostrich, Mynheer. A Namaqua once shot a Bushman, thinking he was an ostrich."*

"But now to change the subject. The poor people to whom we are going are very ignorant, Jacob, and very superstitious, are they not?"

"They are, Mynheer; they know just as little about God and the soul and the future state, as we knew before Mynheer Shaw came to preach the Gospel amongst us; and they are just as cruel to their sick and aged people as we were. You know, Mynheer, that in the old days before the Gospel was preached, our sick and infirm old people, especially women, were left in a kraal to die, a little meat and water being given them as their last repast. The Bible says truly the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty. But all that has changed since Mynheer Shaw came. The light has shone upon the Kamiesberg. Yea, the light of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ. But over the river, the people for the most part are still in darkness and the shadow of death.

"Ah! Mynheer," continued Jacob, "we knew nothing about the true God before the missionary came. We had no churches and no *leeraars*; yet we believed there was a god, or Great Captain (*Tik-guoa*, by name) who was very good, and of whom nobody had cause to be afraid. We also believed in other captains of lesser rank, as well as in a black captain, an evil spirit, whose name was *Guana*. We thought, too, that the

* The method is ingenious, though extremely simple. A kind of flat double cushion is stuffed with straw, and formed something like a saddle. All except the under part of this is covered with feathers, attached to small pegs, and made so as to resemble the bird. The neck and head of an ostrich are stuffed and a small rod introduced. The Bushman intending to attack game, whitens his legs with any substance he can procure. He places the feathered saddle on his shoulders, takes the bottom part of the neck in his right hand, and his bow and poisoned arrows in his left. Such as the writer has seen were the most perfect mimics of the ostrich, and at a few hundred yards distance it is not possible for the human eye to detect the fraud. This human bird appears to pick away at the verdure, turning the head as if keeping a sharp look-out, shakes his feathers, now walks and then trots till he gets within bow shot; and when the flock runs from one receiving an arrow, he runs too. The male ostriches will on some occasions give chase to the strange bird, when he tries to elude them, in a way to prevent their catching his scent; for when once they do, the spell is broken; should one happen to get too near in pursuit he has only to run to windward, or throw off his saddle, to avoid a stroke from a wing which would lay him prostrate.—Rev. Henry Tindall's Lectures on Namaqualand, quotation from Moffat.

moon was a god, and when it appeared in the sky at the beginning of the month, our people assembled and danced and sang and clapped their hands all night long. Then we worshipped the spirits of our fathers, and the god who stood for them was called *Heitsi-Eibib*—he was believed to be a man of war when he was here on earth, and very strong; but as he fought and conquered one of his enemies, he received a wound in his knee and went by the name of "the wounded knee" ever after. Our people prayed to him and believed he had the power to help and protect them. He is thought to have come from the East, and that is why the doors of our huts always open towards the rising sun—why our wagons and carts are placed alongside the mat-houses, with their fronts towards the East, and why our dead are buried with their faces looking in the same direction.

"The spirit of *Heitsi-Eibib* was believed to be wherever the dead were buried. We always threw stones on the graves as we passed, as an offering to this spirit, praying at the same time for his blessing and protection; and the habit remains with us still.

"Then, Mynheer must know that we were very superstitious, before the Gospel was brought to us. We thought every fountain had a snake, and that the water would flow as long as the snake remained, but that it would cease if the snake left the fountain, or were killed.

"We had our witch doctors, too, and very cruel men they were. They would pinch and beat our sick people all over, or cut off the joint of a finger, or do some other cruel thing, until, as they said, they had driven away the sickness. Then, producing a little snake, a bone, a frog, or something else which they had brought with them, they would declare they had taken one or other of these things out of the sick person's body. And if the patient did not recover, he was said to be bewitched, or incurable. Oh! the darkness, the cruelty, the sin was terrible," said Jacob.

"This is all very interesting," remarked Mr. Threlfall, "but where is Johannes?"

"He is looking after the oxen, Mynheer."

A GROUP OF NAMAQUAS.

THE PICTURE SHOWS THE OLD SUN DIAL.

Frederick Smit. John Dirk. Peter Links. Johannes Boyse.

Jacob Jagers. The late Barnabas Shaw Links (brother of Jacob Links). Jan Kriel.

Photo. by Mr. A. Withinshaw.

"Call him, Jacob. You have gathered quite a pile of wood, I see, and we shall be safe enough, I suppose, as long as the fire burns."

"Ja, Mynheer, and when the wood is all burned, we can mount our oxen and move on, and rest a little in the middle of the day."

CHAPTER XIV.

Suspense.

The first information which reached the Station after the departure of the three young men is contained in a letter written from Korasse, dated July 4th, and reads as follows:—

> "We arrived here safely yesterday morning, and preached twice during the day to about twenty adults. Tasted a little animal food the first time since we left. We expect to set off again this evening or to-morrow morning. We travel slowly: have heard some alarming accounts of the state of the Natives and country beyond the Orange River. They report that Gammaap and another chief are dead, and that the people of the Warm Bath are dying of hunger. Some Bastards who live near the mouth of the Great River, passed here yesterday. They said all they could to discourage Jacob and Johannes; but these brave fellows, to use a phrase of Ambrose's, had their courage and confidence 'steeled';* and they declare themselves, through grace, fearless, and not only willing to suffer, but to die, in the cause of the Lord Jesus. I am sure they had more courage than I had; for my heart fainted within me; but, seeing their strength of faith, I got the better of my fears. They are companions to my liking, who often do my soul good, and put me to the blush for the weakness of my faith. They appear to be going on this journey with something of the feeling which the Apostles of

* In the Missionary Notices for 1826 the Rev. Barnabas Shaw writes: "Brother Threlfall and myself had been reading some of the works of St. Ambrose just before he set off, in which the expression was found."

Christ had after their baptism from above. I am happy in my soul, and feel penitent before God for my sins. We have come so far in peace. We often think of you, and our other friends of the Society. Love to all,

Yours truly,

WILLIAM THRELFALL."

This letter, written a few days after the departure from Lilyfountain of Mr. Threlfall and his two companions, and whilst they were still on the south side of the Orange River, is of the deepest interest, showing, as it does, that Mr. Threlfall's good opinion of Jacob and Johannes was confirmed rather than otherwise by closer acquaintance. There is nothing, we should imagine, more trying to the nervous system than a long slow journey on ox-back through such a country as Namaqualand. The most amiable are apt to become irritable under such circumstances; but nothing seemed to ruffle the even temper of Jacob and Johannes. They were delighted to be with the young missionary, and felt not a little honoured that they had been chosen for such an enterprise as that in which they were engaged. They were prepared not only to attend, as far as they were able, to his creature comforts, but to suffer and die with him, or if occasion arose, for him, in the Master's service.

There can be no doubt that the liveliest interest was taken in the *boodschap* (message) from Mr. Threlfall, which had reached the Station. It would be read, first of all, to the wives of Jacob and Johannes; then to Peter, Jacob's brother, and to other members of his family. It would be read, too, in the Church, and in the Raad, as well as to one and another who came up to Lilyfountain from distant parts of the Station. It mattered not that they knew all the letter contained before they came to Mr. Shaw, having discussed every item of it in the huts of their friends. They must, as they said, *Zelf kom hoor bij Mijnheer* (come and hear for themselves from Mr. Shaw). So the letter was read and interpreted into Dutch and Namaqua again and again, until Mr. Shaw

could have repeated it in his sleep. And, upon the whole, the news it contained was good, and the people were satisfied.

More tidings (dated July 19) of the three in whom all were so deeply interested, came from Warm Bath.* It was only a few brief sentences that Mr. Threlfall penned from this place. "He wrote a few lines at Warm Bath," says Mr. Shaw, "where they had remained some time to rest their oxen, and had also purchased others. He says, Tsaumap (whom they found at the Warm Bath) had given them much information respecting the tribes to the northward, that the old Chief was very poor, having been robbed of all his cattle, not by Africaner's people, as had been reported, but by some of the disaffected people of Bethany. He adds that it will be impossible for them to be at Lily-fountain by October 1st, on account of the drought, etc., but that we shall be able to settle the accounts, etc., without him, and charges us not to be uneasy respecting them; that they were designing to proceed the next day."† The above note was received by Mr. Shaw on August 23rd, a little more than a month after it was written by Mr. Threlfall. It was a long journey from the Warm Bath to the Fish River, but it was evident, notwithstanding the information which the three had received from Tsaumap, that they intended to continue their northward journey until their purpose was accomplished. Then they hoped to return and see what arrangements Mr. Shaw could induce the Committee to make for sending a missionary. There was a brevity and a vagueness about this letter that occasioned much anxious thought. What was the exact nature of the intelligence given concerning the Northern tribes? And why was it impossible for the party to be back by the 1st of October?

Many weeks passed, during which there was no further news of the three young men. But, on October 16th, Mr. Shaw

* A perennial fountain, one of the few to be found in Great Namaqualand, having a temperature of from 102° to 105°, about 200 miles from Lilyfountain, afterwards known as Nisbet Bath, the centre of an important mission station with which the late Rev. Henry Tindall was intimately associated in his boyhood.

† Missionary Notices, 1826 p. 132.

received "a letter from Brother Wimmer, of Steinkopf, saying that he had heard the awful news that Brother Threlfall and his companions were murdered." "Of this we took no notice," says Mr. Shaw, "because reports of this kind are frequently circulated. We had long heard that Brother Archbell and three or four of our people had been killed by the Bergenaars. It is also reported that Brother Schmelen is no more." As Mr. Archbell and those who were with him, had, notwithstanding the above reports, returned to Lilyfountain, safe and sound, Mr. Shaw was slow to believe current rumours concerning Mr. Threlfall, Jacob and Johannes. On November 5th, however, a Namaqua from the Great River arrived at the Station, bringing substantially the same disquieting report. But this, also, might only be a rumour, and as it differed from other reports in many particulars, Mr. Shaw, being of a sanguine temperament, still hoped for the best. Some eight days after the arrival of the Namaqua from the Great River, there came to Lilyfountain a number of people from Warm Bath, who all declared it was their firm opinion that the brethren who had gone from Lilyfountain were killed; that Mr. Schmelen also, who, it appears, had gone to the river Koesip, would never return. But these people brought with them more than rumours. They were the bearers of several receipts for cattle, purchased by Mr. Threlfall, the price of which was to be paid by Mr. Shaw. These were eagerly scanned by the missionary, who discovered that they were dated August 6th and 8th. On the back of one of them Mr. Shaw nervously read the following communication in Mr. Threlfall's own handwriting:—

> "Being rather unkindly treated by this people, in their not finding or permitting us to have a guide, we returned to the Warm Bath yesterday, after being four days to the north and losing one of our oxen. I feel great need of your prayers. My patience is much tried. These people are very unfeeling and deceitful; but, thank God, we are all in good health, though we doubt of success. Our cattle are so poor, that they cannot, I think, bring us home; but we shall yet try to go further, and then it is

not unlikely that I may send Johannes and a Native to you for oxen to fetch us away. Don't be uneasy about us: we all feel often much comforted in our souls, and the Lord gives us patience. We are obliged to beg hard to buy meat. My best love to all, particularly to Mrs. Shaw and the children, and Mr. and Mrs. Haddy. Peace be with you.—WILLIAM THRELFALL.

It was probably about the end of August when this account was presented to Mr. Shaw for payment, and it was with a heavy heart that he read the doleful words on the back. The loss of the ox was a small matter, though it was not without a pang of regret that he thought of the fate of the patient animal which had left the Mission house in such good condition. But Mr. Threlfall, Jacob and Johannes, were they safe?

The people of the Station, anxious to receive information, crowded round the Mission house, for *boodschap* (tidings) of their friends beyond the river.

"Were they well?"

"Yes, they were well, but they had lost an ox."

Months passed, and no further information was received of the three young men. The growing corn, which they had regarded with so much interest, was reaped and garnered, and Mr. Shaw saw to it that the interests of Jacob and Johannes did not suffer in their absence. The produce of their small allotment was reaped by friendly neighbours, and safely housed in the Station barn. But still there was no news. Christmas came and went. The Watchnight Service—the largest service of the year—was held; and prayer, earnest and continuous, was offered for the absent three. The annual election of Raadsmen was conducted on New Year's Day by the missionary, and burghers came from the most distant outstations, some of which were over thirty miles away, but they brought no satisfactory news. Rumours, however, of an ugly nature, had, as the reader knows, been abroad for some time before Christmas, and it was whispered in the huts that all three had been mur-

dered. It was said, too, that Mr. Schmelen, of Great Namaqualand, had also met the same fate, but when he arrived at Lilyfountain, on December 15th, safe and well, having come for supplies, it seemed reasonable to suppose that Mr. Threlfall, Jacob and Johannes, would yet return.

The summer, however, was wearing away, and the ploughing season was again at hand. But still the absent three came not!

CHAPTER XV.

The Chariot of Israel and the Horsemen Thereof.

It was a sore trial to Mr. Threlfall to discover that the Natives of Warm Bath were not disposed to assist him on his journey to the Fish River. Not only were they unwilling to recommend a guide; they absolutely prohibited him from taking one. The reason for such conduct can only be surmised. To Mr. Threlfall it seemed to be prompted by an unkind feeling towards himself; but in the light of what afterwards happened, it appears more than probable that it was the Natives' way of saving him from what they regarded as a hazardous enterprise. There was famine in the land, and that was doubtless why Mr. Threlfall and those who were with him were "obliged to beg hard to buy meat." For Natives who had to tighten their belts to lessen the pangs of hunger were scarcely likely to part with their fast diminishing supplies. Game, too, would be scarce in such a season, for the natural instincts of the wild animals would lead them to avoid a land which was languishing for lack of rain.

But, guide or no guide, difficulties or no difficulties, Mr. Threlfall intended to push forward. It was in this spirit that, with Jacob and Johannes, he started from Warm Bath, *without a guide*. After travelling four days northwards, they lost an ox, apparently because they had failed to discover water. The nature of the journey that was still before them is indicated by the fact that it was thought more advisable to return to the Bath than to continue their forward journey. This, of course, meant that if all went well, it would be from eight to ten days before they could expect to recover lost ground. The probability is that the fear of losing all their oxen and of being left in the desert without means of transport, led them to return. This seems the more likely, as the receipt which was presented to Mr. Shaw was not for a single ox, but for a number of cattle.

Yet even after the purchase of fresh animals, Mr. Threlfall, as he thought of the long journey through the desert that was before him, doubted their ability to bring him home: and no wonder, for, while the famine continued, the oxen would have next to nothing to eat. By this time he had little hope of success; but, he thought, if the animals failed, and his worst fears were realised, Johannes and another Native might be sent to Mr. Shaw for oxen to bring him and Jacob back to Lilyfountain. Here we see the indomitable perseverance which, perhaps, more than any single faculty, constitutes the strength of the British character. It seems clear that Mr. Threlfall did not know when he was beaten, and in view of all that had occurred after he left the Kamiesberg, we cannot help thinking that he was scarcely justified in pursuing his hazardous undertaking. The circumstances of the country, the condition of the Natives, and the state of Mr. Threlfall's own feelings, so far as we can understand these things to-day, all appear to have indicated that a forward move was inopportune, and that the time to retire had come. For fully a month it had been evident that neither the country nor the Natives were in a normal condition. Some of the chiefs were reported to have died, and the people of Warm Bath were starving. Certain Bastards living near the mouth of the Orange River had conversed with Jacob and Johannes, with the object of inducing them to return. They had proceeded, however, unmolested until they arrived at Warm Bath. But there again, one Tsaumaap, who had come from the interior, had given them such information concerning the tribes to the northward as had led them to conclude that it would be impossible to get back to Lilyfountain by the 1st of October. The petty Namaqua Chief at Warm Bath, Oubibmob Tjaribob, had, moreover, placed every obstacle in the way of their proceeding, being not only unwilling to find them a guide, but not permitting them for a time at least, to secure one for themselves. So they stood at the parting of the ways. Two courses were before them. They might risk all dangers, and press forward towards the Fish River; or, do what seemed to flesh and blood a thing far more humiliating, return to the Station by the way they came. They had decided upon the former course, and had

started from Warm Bath without a guide. But Providence again seemed to block their way. When four days from the Bath, the loss of an ox had compelled them to return, and the difficulties of their enterprise appeared greater and far more hazardous than before. It was an absolute necessity, if they were to proceed, that they should purchase fresh animals. Yet they had not the wherewithal to buy. That difficulty, however, seems to have been overcome by drawing upon Mr. Shaw, who was two hundred miles away, and the confidence which even the heathen Natives of Great Namaqualand placed in the missionary at Lilyfountain is shown by the fact that such an arrangement was possible. These simple children of nature had heard from afar of the advent of Barnabas Shaw, and they knew he was a man in whom implicit confidence might be placed. So was the way prepared by the unconscious influence of a servant of God for the dissemination of the Gospel.

The difficulty of the oxen being overcome, Mr. Threlfall was still without a guide. Food supplies, too, were uncertain. The people seemed unfeeling and deceitful, and, worse than all, he himself had little hope of success.

Again he stood at the parting of the ways. It was hard to proceed, but harder still to turn back. It is just possible that Mr. Threlfall's high sense of duty would not allow him to return.

The party seem to have left Warm Bath for the second time, on the 9th or 10th of August. A guide had been secured, in the person of one Nauwghaap, a dirty, repulsive looking fellow, capable of any crime, whose life had been wholly governed by animal instincts. On the present occasion his cupidity was evidently aroused by the sight of the little property which Mr. Threlfall possessed. That this degraded creature acted as has been suggested upon instructions received from the petty Chief Oubibmob Tjaribob, who had previously attempted to dissuade Mr. Threlfall from proceeding to the Fish River, appears, in view of all the facts, to be highly improbable.

As the party proceeded, the guide, whether by accident or arrangement is not quite clear, seems to have been joined by several other men,

one at least of whom had been out on a hunting expedition, and was carrying a gun. Mr. Threlfall appears to have offered some objection to the hunter joining his party, but as Nauwghaap insisted, he was reluctantly compelled to submit to the arrangement.

On the first or second night after their departure from Warm Bath, Mr. Threlfall, Jacob and Johannes, were conducted to a Bushman's kraal. This would be nothing more than a small enclosure of bushes in the open-air. A fire was lighted as usual, and the evening meal was prepared. Mr. Threlfall and his two faithful companions were left alone, the other members of the party having retired. After the evening meal they are believed to have sung the following hymn, which was a great favourite of Jacob's, especially in times of trouble.

The nearest way is known to God,
Which leads to yonder bright abode ;
If grief—or joy the best will be,
Leave all with Him—the Lord shall see.

He leads us through this earthly vale,
His word of truth shall never fail,
Secure does every promise stand,
And we shall reach our Fatherland.

When creature aid would all be vain,
His promise with us shall remain
The same through one eternal day,
When earthly joys are fled away.

When passing through the shades of death.
When yielding up this fleeting breath,
In need, our only Friend is He,
Who gives the final victory.

The hymn over, they read a portion of God's Word, and knelt in prayer, after their manner, and soon all three were wrapped in their karosses, and fast asleep. Their rest was undisturbed until after midnight, when Mr. Threlfall was aroused by the report of a gun. The Bushmen, led by the guide, Nauwghaap, armed with their bows and arrows and assegais, had invaded the kraal!

"What is the matter, Jacob? What noise was that? Are the lions near?"

Jacob did not answer.

Alas! his back was broken, a bullet having penetrated his spine.

Johannes was already dead. The arrows of the Bushmen and the stones had done their deadly work upon him.

Mr. Threlfall, seeing dark figures creeping stealthily about the kraal, and feeling that the kaross which covered him was being pulled from his body, arose and went towards his baggage. There he knelt in prayer, the murderers pursuing him, with relentless cruelty, dealing blow after blow. But as they did their deadly work, a prayer was heard in heaven, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." And, lo! as William Threlfall prayed, the forms of the assassins dissolved into "the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." And that night whilst cruel hands stripped the bodies of the slain, a fiery car swept through the pearly gates, and three young immortal spirits joined the ministering hosts that wait before the throne of God. From a Bushman's kraal they were translated to a higher service in the Palace of the King, and the good they would have done, but could not accomplish, was placed to their account.

The writer of this story is loth to say one word which may seem in any wise to detract from the many good things which have been here recorded concerning Jacob. The following note, however, must, in the interests of truth, be added. It is an extract from a letter written by Mr. Threlfall himself, during his sojourn at Kamiesberg, to the Rev. William Shaw, in which he gives what we believe to be a discriminating and withal just estimate of Jacob's natural character. How grace elevated and strengthened that character will be noted by the reader. Mr. Threlfall writes: "Jacob Links is the schoolmaster and interpreter; he is well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, and is intelligent and pious; but he has still the peculiarities of a Namaqua, weak in his resolutions and timid in all his proceedings; he appears, however, to have a keen sense of his defects, combined with a gracious simplicity and deep humility; he is always cheerful, very affectionate, and I believe he is established with grace."

It is probable that if Mr. Threlfall had lived to write to the Rev. Wm. Shaw, after his return from Great Namaqualand he would have referred to Jacob in a different strain. The reader will remember his letter to the Rev. Barnabas Shaw, in which he extolled the courage of his two Namaqua companions at the expense of his own. The men who were weak in their resolutions and timid in all their proceedings became resolute and bold in their Master's Service; and to-day we magnify the grace of God in them which so marvellously triumphed over nature, comforting ourselves with the assurance that what Jacob and Johannes were, we too, the weakest and most sinful of us, most assuredly may become.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Old Home at Hollowforth.

The ministry of consolation was fully appreciated in the old home at Hollowforth, when, after hoping against hope for many weary months, the inmates were compelled to believe that no doubt whatever existed as to the fate of the absent member of their family, whose career they had followed with a loving and prayerful interest ever since he left the shores of Old England less than five years before. The tributes which reached the family from the Rev. Barnabas and the Rev. William Shaw, and the consolation which those good men sought to impart, were as balm to their wounded spirits. It was, then as now, God's way to make His grace sufficient, through human agents. The following extract from a letter written by the Rev. William Shaw, dated July 11th, 1826, and published in the Missionary Notices for 1827, will serve to reveal the esteem in which Mr. Threlfall was held by those who knew him best, and the reader will have little difficulty in imagining the comfort which it must have brought to his sorrowing parents:

> "My first acquaintance with Mr. Threlfall took place on his arrival at Salem, in 1822, the Committee having in the early part of that year sent him out to my help on the Albany Circuit. Being single, he lodged with my family (excepting when itinerating, according to our plan) at Salem all the time he remained on the Circuit, which was about a year; hence I had a good opportunity of forming an opinion of his character.
>
> "As a Christian, his piety was of a high order: he appeared to be deeply convinced of the importance of enjoying at all times a sense of the favour of God: he lived much in the spirit of prayer, and several long and close conversations that occurred between us, and which are still fresh in my recollection,

evinced at once his relish for, and deep acquaintance with, 'the hidden things of God.' He was naturally of a warm temper, but he was deeply sensible of it, and if at any time he thought he had been betrayed by his feelings into any undue severity, or even trifling impropriety of language, he had enough of Christian humility to acknowledge the evil, and to lament the unnecessary pain which he might thereby have occasioned.

"At our Love Feasts I was several times much gratified and edified by the explicit manner in which he spoke of his Christian experience; he seemed continually to be able to say, 'For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.'

"As a Christian minister and missionary, his memory will always be cherished by those who knew him, and enjoyed the benefit of his ministerial instructions. His sermons were not characterised by eloquence of speech, but nevertheless his language was generally correct, and always grave, and suited to the capacities of his hearers. His sermons usually contained sound divinity, illustrated and proved in its various branches by the Holy Scriptures.

"He faithfully reproved sinners, and assiduously sought to reclaim the wanderers from the fold of Christ; in those important parts of the Christian minister's duty, he was eminently successful, and there are now in Albany, and in other parts of the Colony, several who I trust will be 'the crown of his rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.' He was very attentive to his appointments on the Circuit, and was withal an affectionate colleague; when he saw me oppressed with the cares of building the Grahamstown and Salem Chapels, and other affairs which at that time devolved upon one, he was always ready to propose relieving me of some part of the labour, whenever in his power. He seemed to have devoted himself entirely to the great work of preaching among the heathen the 'unsearchable riches of Christ,' and was therefore anxious to make known the Gospel in those 'regions where Christ is not named.'"

The Kamiesberg Mission as it appeared in 1903.
The picture shows the present School Buildings with the Church and Mission House adjoining.

Photo. by Mr. A. Withinshaw.

After referring to several incidents connected with Mr. Threlfall's career, with which the reader is already familiar, the Rev. William Shaw continues:—

"How awfully inexplicable is the God of wisdom, to short-sighted man! How mysterious do the attendant circumstances of our late brother's death appear! Cut off by the hands of men, whose present and eternal good he was assiduously seeking! But for such a result, how unexpected so ever it may have been, I know he was not unprepared. I believe he had 'fully counted the cost,' before he entered on the missionary work; he seemed to me to be continually dwelling on sentiments like those contained in the following beautiful lines of the 'sweet singer' of Methodism:

> The love of Christ doth me constrain
> To seek the wand'ring souls of men;
> With cries, entreaties, tears, to save,
> To snatch them from the yawning grave.
>
> My life, my blood, I here present,
> If for Thy truth I may be spent;
> Fulfil Thy sovereign counsel, Lord,
> Thy will be done, Thy name ador'd.

"Let us, however, not be cast down beyond measure," continues Mr. Shaw, "by this severe trial of our faith. God has, indeed, been pleased to allow His servant to perish, while engaged in His service, but He will still carry on His own work, in a way, and by means, of which we can now form no conceptions. William Threlfall is, indeed, no longer our companion and fellow labourer on the earth; but he is gone to join the 'noble army of martyrs,' now before the Throne of God, where the bloody hand of the pitiless assassin shall be never seen, where the inhabitants shall not say, 'I am sick,' where they shall hunger no more, neither thirst, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; and where 'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.'"

How unspeakably precious must this beautiful, yet by no means too laudatory tribute and these wonderful words of consolation have been to the sorrowing relatives of William Threlfall, at Hollowforth! And to them must be added the briefer, yet not less precious, testimony of the Rev. Barnabas Shaw, who wrote as follows:—

"To all that has been stated respecting him,—Mr. Threlfall—I can bear testimony; but yet the one-half has not been told. For spirituality of mind and earnestness in prayer, for affection to the Natives, and a longing desire by all means to win them to Christ; for deadness to the world, and zeal for the glory of the Redeemer in the extension of the Gospel, I never saw his equal."

And then there was James Montgomery's beautiful poem, which must be reckoned among the imperishable wreaths consecrated to the memory of William Threlfall, and none, surely, would touch the heart of the martyr's parents more than this; for none are more beautifully sympathetic, and none breathe more precious words of comfort. Every line of the poem shows that the sweet singer to whom we are indebted for several of the hymns in our Hymn-book, had been stirred to his heart's depth by the recital of William Threlfall's story.

The poem is as follows:—

In Memory of

THE REV. WILLIAM THRELFALL,

WESLEYAN MISSIONARY IN SOUTH AFRICA,

WHO—WITH TWO NATIVE CONVERTS, DEVOTED TO THE SAME SERVICE AND SACRIFICE FOR THE SAKE OF THEIR COUNTRYMEN,—WAS TREACHEROUSLY MURDERED BY THEIR GUIDE AND HIS ACCOMPLICES, ON THEIR WAY TO CARRY THE GOSPEL INTO

GREAT NAMAQUALAND,

AUGUST, 1825.

Not by the lion's paw, the serpent's tooth,
  By sudden sun-stroke, or by slow decay,
War, famine, plague,—meek messenger of truth—
  Wert thou arrested on thy pilgrim-way.

The sultry whirlwind spared thee in its wrath,
  The lightning flash'd before thee, and pass'd by,
The brooding earthquake paused beneath thy path,
  The mountain-torrent shunn'd thee, or ran dry

Thy march was through the savage wilderness,
  Thine errand thither, like thy gracious Lord's,
To seek and save the lost, to heal and bless
  Its blind and lame, diseased and dying hordes.

How did the love of Christ, that, like a chain,
  Drew Christ Himself to Bethlehem from His throne
And bound Him to the cross, thine heart constrain,
  Thy willing heart, to make that true love known!

But not to build, was thine appointed part,
  Temple where temple never stood before,
Yet was it well the thought was in thine heart,
  Thou know'st it now—Thy Lord required no more.

The wings of darkness round thy tent were spread,
  The wild beasts' howlings brake not thy repose,
The silent stars were watching over-head,
  Thy friends were nigh thee,—nigh thee were thy foes.

The sun went down upon thine evening prayer,
  He rose upon thy finish'd sacrifice:
The house of God, the gate of heaven was there,
  Angels and fiends on thee had fix'd their eyes.

At midnight, in a moment, open stood
  Th' eternal doors to give thy spirit room:
At morn the earth had drunk thy guiltless blood,
  But where on earth may now be found thy tomb?

At rest beneath the ever-shifting sand,
  This thine unsculptured epitaph remain,
Till the last trump shall summon sea and land,—
  "To me to live was Christ, to die was gain."

* * * *

And must with thee thy slain companions lie,
  Unmourn'd, unsung, forgotten where they fell?
O for the spirit and power of prophecy,
  Their life, their death, the fruits of both to tell!
They took the cross, they bore it, they lay down
Beneath it, woke, and found that cross their crown.

O'er their lost relics, on the spot where guilt
Slew sleeping innocence, and hid the crime,
A church of Christ, amidst the desert built.
May gather converts till the end of time,
And there with them, their kindred, dust to dust,
Await the resurrection of the just.

It has been before remarked that Mr. Threlfall gave himself and all that he had, or expected to have, to the service of Christ. His consecration was without any reservation whatever. His father knew this full well, and the wishes of his son, William, not only regarding his personal estate, but regarding the legacy to which he would have succeeded, were carried out by him to the letter. In referring to this, the Rev. Samuel Broadbent says: "The writer heard the Rev. George Morley state that, when the Missionary Secretaries communicated to the father and his family the painful intelligence of his son's death, expressing at the same time their sincere condolence with them in this afflictive dispensation of Providence, they also stated that there were certain articles, the property of the late Mr. William Threlfall, which, if desired as mementoes of him, the Committee would direct to be returned to this country, and sent to the family. His excellent father, in reply, expressed his deep sorrow at the event; but in meek submission to the Sovereign will, added, with reference to the property, 'If there be anything which belonged to my son, let it be divided among his brethren in the South African Mission.'" The articles referred to were sold, realising the sum of £109 2s., which amount was remitted to Mr. Threlfall, senr., who returned it to the Treasurers of the Missionary Society. Nor was this all. The sum of £119 12s. was given to cover the education, from 1823 to 1828, of the two Native boys whom Mr. Threlfall had brought from Delagoa Bay. A further sum of £381 6s., being a portion of Mr. Richard Threlfall's property intended for his son, was paid to the Society in 1833; and, in a letter dated May 2nd, 1840, yet another sum of £1,000 was received by the Society. In remitting this, after the death of Mr. Richard Threlfall, Henry Threlfall, Esq., of Hollowforth, brother of William Threlfall, deceased, wrote to the Rev. Thomas

Farmer, one of the General Treasurers of the Missionary Society, as follows:—

> "I have great pleasure in forwarding the enclosed One Thousand Pounds, in accordance with the directions of my late revered father, and the request of my lamented brother William, to be appropriated to the furtherance of the cause of God, by the instrumentality of your Society; in the earnest hope and fullest confidence that, under Divine influence, your best endeavours will be used to carry out the intentions of the donor."

Thus did the works of William Threlfall and his honoured father follow them, after they had both passed to their reward.

CHAPTER XVII.

Silverfontein. Justice and Mercy.

"I am surprised that the Chief of the Bondel-Zwarts has not arrived," said Mr. J. Ryneveld, the adjunct Landdrost of Clanwilliam, to his Secretary, Mr. Schoonberg, on the evening of August 30th, 1827. "It will be annoying if they do not come after we have travelled all this way to hand over the prisoners; but it is just like the Natives. A few hours, or even a few days, are nothing to them, and I suppose we shall have to wait some time longer."

A group of men, including two Field Cornets, had arrived at Silverfontein, having with them as prisoners two degraded-looking men of the lowest* Hottentot type, Nauwghaap and Conghaap, by name. The former of these—a notoriously wicked yet strong character—was an outlaw of the desert. His sins had left their marks upon his features, and he appeared capable of any crime. The latter had also the appearance of a hardened criminal, but if his accomplice was wicked and strong, he himself was wicked and weak. Both were closely guarded by armed men, and had either attempted to escape he would have been shot without compunction; for one was to be executed in any case, the other was to receive forty-one strokes with the *sjambok*, and the officers of justice only awaited the arrival of the Chiefs of the Bondel-Zwarts before flogging the one, and carrying out the extreme penalty of the law upon the other. As the party had been at Silverfontein for several days, considerable surprise and some impatience were occasioned by

* Nauwghaap was certainly a Namaqua. He is described as such by the Rev. Barnabas Shaw in his *Memorials of South Africa*, p. 270. Conghaap is also described by Nauwghaap as a Namaqua, in the "Extracts from the Diary of the Deputy Landdrost of Clanwilliam," which have been preserved to us in the *Missionary Notices* for 1827. It is equally clear, however, that they were assisted by four or more Bushmen in the perpetration of the crime.

the non-appearance of the Chiefs. On the afternoon of the 27th, messengers had been sent to the Great River to inform the Chief of the Bondel-Zwarts, at Warm Bath, that the Government authorities were waiting for him at the appointed place, but on the 30th, the stern representatives of justice were still looking impatiently for his arrival. The Rev. J. Edwards, the successor of the Rev. Barnabas Shaw, at Lily-fountain, after waiting from the 27th until the 30th of August, had felt compelled to return to the Station. He had proceeded to Silverfontein in order that he might minister to the prisoners, as well as to the farmers and Bastard Hottentots, who were ordered to be present at the execution. Mr. Marquard, another missionary, was also in attendance, having accompanied the Magistrate from Clanwilliam, and to him it would fall to administer the last consolations of religion. The time spent in waiting at Silverfontein had not been wasted, for on the morning of the 28th, Mr. Marquard had preached to a large congregation of farmers and Hottentots, and Mr. Edwards had himself conducted a service in Dutch, expounding John vi. 37—a most appropriate text for such an occasion.

"*All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.*"

It is highly probable that the prisoners not only heard, but understood the Gospel preached on this occasion. Both these wretched men had felt, in different ways, since committing the diabolical crime, of which they stood convicted, in the Bushman's Kraal in Great Namaqualand, two years before, that the way of transgressors is hard. The weaker of the two, Conghaap, and perhaps the one most to be pitied, had at once carried the tidings of the terrible tragedy to the Chief, who at Warm Bath had placed obstacles in the way of Mr. Threlfall's going north. But it is significant that the other man, the guide Nauwghaap, who represented to his accomplices as well as to the Magistrate at Clanwilliam, that he acted upon this Chief's instructions, fled himself after the murders were committed, far into the wilderness, with the

object of avoiding the very man whose orders he had professed to obey. What occurred after Mr. Threlfall's fate and that of his two faithful companions, was made known at Warm Bath, was related by Conghaap in Court. He seems to have told, in sickening detail, how the crime was committed, how the bodies were afterwards stripped—the arrows being extracted—and left unburied for the vultures and hyenas to devour; how Mr. Threlfall's clothes were worn by a Bushman, how the spoil was divided, and how the assassins fled. The impression produced upon the Namaqua Chief at Warm Bath by the recital of this story was described by Conghaap as follows:—

> "When said Captain heard of this cruel thing he was very angry, and said to me: 'How could Nauwghaap do this?' as he directed him to conduct these people safe: and immediately issued orders that he (Nauwghaap) should be pursued by a Commando, and brought to death: but the other Captains hearing this, advised him, Oubibmob Tjaribob, to go on very quiet, and try to get him in hands by amicable means. Titus Africaander afterwards caught him, and sent him to this Colony: and my Captain Klein (little) Cobus Brickland, directed me to go along with him, Nauwghaap, in order to be a witness against him, as he denies all, and by this manner I am here."

After the capture of Nauwghaap, by Titus Africaander, he was handed over to the Colonial Government for punishment. The trial had been conducted at Clanwilliam, Conghaap giving evidence against Nauwghaap (who had himself acknowledged his guilt, expressing sorrow, of a sort, for the crime he had committed), and sentence of death had been passed upon him. At Silverfontein he was to be handed back to the Namaqua Chief for punishment, the time and place of execution having been previously arranged. Silverfontein is a farm, well planted with fruit trees and vines, between Lilyfountain and Springbokfontein. It was probably chosen because it was just over the border.

On the evening of the 24th of August, Nauwghaap had arrived at Lilyfountain, *en route* to the place of execution, guarded by several men. The Magistrate and his Secretary, with the Missionary, Mr. Marquard, and two Field Cornets, had reached the Mission house a few hours earlier in the day. Great interest had been excited on the Station, and all were anxious to see the ruffian whose hands were stained with the martyrs' blood. It was well that he was guarded by armed men, and that the Magistrate was present, for some of the Namaquas whispered: "If he were not in the hands of the Landdrost, we would kill him immediately." Old Keudo Links, father of the martyred Jacob, said to him: "What did you think? Did you think I should never find you?"

The wretched man was allowed to sit in the sun, and as he did so, "several of Jacob's friends, especially his sister, Martha, who was much affected, spoke to him respecting the salvation of his soul, and the necessity of repentance before he left this world." The man replied: "I am too lean; give me plenty of food, and make me strong, and then I shall call upon the Lord."

And now he had arrived at Silverfontein, the place of execution. He was surrounded by armed men, and the relentless representatives of law were present.

A cloud of dust in the distance indicated, at last, the approach of the Namaqua Chiefs. They came on the morning of the 2nd of September —after the officers of justice had waited for nearly a week—the Pella Chief arriving first, with a guard of eleven men, in addition to several of his people. Then the Chief of the Bondel-Zwarts appeared,—not Oubibmob Tjaribob, for he was too old to travel so great a distance, but his son—escorted by a bodyguard, forming quite a cavalcade, of twenty-three men, nearly all carrying firearms. Some conversation seems to have taken place between him and the Magistrate, from which it appeared that he not only offered no objection to the proposals of the Government concerning the punishment of the prisoners, but that, on the contrary, he fully approved of the penalty about to be exacted.

Before the sentence was carried out, Nauwghaap, at his own request, was allowed to interview the son of Oubibmob Tjaribob. What

passed between the two men is not known, but "the Chief was heard to say that Nauwghaap told falsehoods; that he was known to be an old murderer, and that he must now suffer."

On September 3rd, the sentence of death was carried out. The grave of the murderer was dug, and he was placed beside it, six men standing ready to fire. It was then, as he stood upon the brink of Eternity, and not till then, that he called upon God in the Namaqua tongue to have mercy on his soul.

Did he at the last moment turn his eyes towards the light and catch the first glint that was to increase as the æons passed, until with unveiled face he beheld the perfect day? We cannot tell, but this we know, that there is hope for a man, however degraded he may be, who, from whatever cause, turns his eyes upwards and cries for mercy when all other help has failed. Perhaps in the order of Providence it had failed in the case of Nauwghaap, for that very reason. Nor need we enquire too deeply into the motives which led him to pray. For it was not until the prodigal was perishing of hunger, *after having spent all*, that he thought of the bread in his Father's house, and said: "I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."

But the Father—surely much depended upon His attitude, and upon what He had to say about such conduct. True, everything depended ultimately upon that; but, upon the authority of Him who came into this world to reveal the Father, we know what the attitude of God is towards the sinner, however degraded, who cries to Heaven in his extremity, and turns his feet Godwards.

> *When he was yet a great way off, his Father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.*

As we have considered the details of Nauwghaap's tragic end, the reader must have contrasted his all but painless death with the exit from

this world, too harrowing to contemplate, of William Threlfall, Jacob Links, and Johannes Jager. We stand here in the presence not only of mystery, but of apparent injustice, and the only explanation is that which the Word of God affords. The curtain drops, in this life, upon the first act of a drama which is going on still, and, as reasonable beings ignorant of many things, perhaps, indeed, of most things, we must reserve our judgment until the parts have all been played. Nor need we give expression to pious platitudes concerning the will of God; for Sin, the parent of suffering and death, is always contrary to the Divine purpose. Why God does not interpose to prevent sin, with its consequent suffering, is a question we cannot fully discuss here, but we may well believe that the Nature of God being what it is, and man, through the infinite condescension of God having partaken of that Nature, it is impossible for the Almighty to prevent the innocent from suffering in consequence of their own ignorance, or of the wrong-doing of others, without destroying that which constitutes the crown and glory of manhood. Had God made it possible for us to suffer here, less than we do, we should have been less divine than we are. The only way in which it is conceivable to us that this could have been done, in a world like ours, and with probationary mortals such as ourselves, was by creating us a lower order of beings. But who would willingly exchange life, as we know it, with all its perils and with all its pains, for that? For if there were less pain, there would be less happiness—less temptation, there would be less virtue. Our danger of falling is only equalled by our possibility to rise. The depths of degradation to which we may sink are less than the god-like heights of character to which we may ascend. An infinite capacity for happiness brings with it a corresponding capacity for suffering. But, as the Scriptures saith, "This, our light and transitory burden of suffering is achieving for us a preponderance; yes, a vastly preponderating, and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at things seen, but things unseen; for things seen are temporary, but things unseen are eternal."—II. Cor. iv. 17 (Weymouth's Translation).

CHAPTER XVIII.

Nisbet Bath Mission.

It was on the 11th of April, in the year 1832, nearly seven years after William Threlfall's death, that the Rev. Edward Cook, a young Wesleyan minister, twenty-six years of age (the grandfather of the Rev. A. J. Cook, B.A. and the Rev. George T. Cook, now in our ministry), arrived in Table Bay.

Edward Cook's first appointment was to Capetown, where he remained for nearly two years. It was during his residence in that Circuit that he met Josiah Nisbet, of the Madras Civil Service. It appears that he was conducting a service at one of the outstations at which Mr. Nisbet was present, and was drawn towards him by the fervour of his responses. The two men met after the meeting, and an acquaintance was formed which very soon ripened into the closest friendship. They were both missionary enthusiasts, and had much in common.

A missionary meeting was subsequently held at Simonstown, with Mr. Nisbet in the chair, Mr. Cook also being present. Much was said at that meeting concerning the needs of Great Namaqualand, and there can be little doubt that the story of William Threlfall was told, as well as some very pathetic incidents connected with the Chief of the Bondel-Zwarts, and the Namaqua tribe at Warm Bath. As long ago as August 11th, 1826, a year after Mr. Threlfall's death, and six years before the historic missionary meeting was held over which Mr. Nisbet presided, a deputation from Great Namaqualand, headed by the Chief, had waited upon Mr. Haddy, at Lilyfountain, with the object of securing a Wesleyan missionary for Great Namaqualand. What occurred was told by Mr. Haddy himself in the *Missionary Notices* for 1827, as follows:—

"To-day (August 11th), the Chief of the Bondel-Zwarts, with ten of his people, from the Warm Bath, Great Namaqualand, visited us. As soon as he arrived in the place, unloaded his oxen, and greeted in the customary manner those who were near, he desired to be introduced to me. I was glad of his visit, on the ground of having thereby an opportunity of asking him some questions relative to Mr. Threlfall, etc., and hoped to receive some further information. But in this I was disappointed, for he said his object was to induce me to come over and live among his people."

It appears that a report had reached the Chief, which had led him to hope that a missionary might immediately be sent. On Mr. Haddy pointing out to him the impossibility of his leaving the Station, he appeared very sorry. On the following day, however, he came again to the missionary, and brought pressure to bear upon him, so anxious was he to receive a teacher for his people, and when he found it was all in vain, he said: "Although I go to-day without a teacher, it is contrary to my desires; it is hard for me; it makes me sorrowful; for I wish to have my people taught and governed by better principles than those tribes are governed which are near me. I do not like to live as others do." Mr. Haddy describes the scene in the garden, as they all sat upon the ground,—some of the Lilyfountain people having joined the deputation,—as a truly affecting one. The disappointment and even sorrow of the suppliants who had not gained their suit, was depicted in their countenances. This occurred on Saturday, August the 12th, and the next day Mr. Haddy preached from I Timothy i. 15: "This is a faithful saying," etc., the strangers being present. In the afternoon he discoursed on the 139th Psalm, and then the usual prayer meeting was held.

On the following day the Chief came again, desirous of knowing how long it would be before a missionary could be sent. Mr. Haddy promised to make known his wishes, and expressed his willingness to go himself, if the Committee sanctioned his appointment.

This Chief subsequently visited Capetown for the same object, but

as long after as 1832, when Mr. Cook arrived at the Cape, no missionary had been sent. Ethiopia was still stretching out her hands.

When the story was told at the missionary meeting just referred to, with Mr. Nisbet in the chair, Mr. Cook being present, enthusiasm seems to have risen to white heat. The chairman offered to give £200 towards recommencing the Mission if any one could be found ready to volunteer for the work

"Here am I, send me," said Edward Cook.

Soon a letter was on the way to England, from the Rev. Barnabas Shaw, addressed to the Missionary Committee, every line of which, even to-day, shows how deeply his soul had been stirred.

"DEAR BRETHREN,—

You have been praying, *we* have been praying, and thousands of the pious have been praying for open doors to preach the Gospel to regions beyond. Here you have an answer to prayer. You want money; I enclose £200 from an individual who has been many years in India—J. Nisbet, Esq.,—who is now here to recruit his health. I hope he will soon be perfectly restored, and his valuable life be spared many years to do good in the world. You want a missionary! A brother is ready to go, and offers himself freely. You want a Chief to take a missionary under his wing; there is one ready. You have a command in your Bible, 'Go ye into all the world,' etc.; and Jehovah's promise, 'Lo, I am with you alway.'"

Mr. Cook was, of course, appointed. He was married in January, 1834, to Miss Mary Frances Thornhill, a lady in whom he found "an affectionate wife and efficient helpmeet and coadjutor." His journey to Great Namaqualand, and subsequent labours there, are "another story," which cannot be related here. Suffice it to say that Mr. and Mrs. Cook, after enduring great hardships and privations, and surmounting many difficulties, were completely successful in establishing a Wesleyan

Mission at Nisbet Bath. They found the people not only willing to receive the Gospel, but, as they said, "eminently prepared of the Lord."

. . . . . .

Thirteen years had passed away since the missionary meeting at Simonstown just described, and Edward Cook, after nine years of incessant but highly successful toil, had passed to his reward. The fruit of his labour, however, remained, and of this the Rev. Benjamin Ridsdale, Mr. Cook's successor, shall testify:—

> "We have had, for the last four months at least, five hundred persons resident on the Station. . . . When the services of the Sanctuary are closed, they may be frequently seen sitting in groups near the chapel, conversing together on such parts of the sermon as have most particularly arrested their attention."
>
> "On Monday and Friday evenings, when no service is held in the chapel, the bell is tolled (not rung, as on other occasions) for family prayers in their own houses; and it is often very delightful, on going outside our dwelling a few minutes afterwards, to hear the voice of praise ascending from many a habitation, and then followed by the prayers and supplications of the heads of the respective households."
>
> "Never did we experience more (I might almost venture to say so much) spiritual enjoyment, even in our delightful Class Meetings in England, than we do whilst listening to the simple and artless, but sincere and intelligent, Christian experiences of many of our Namaqua members. We feel sure they are 'fellow heirs, and of the same body and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel.'"*

And this, among the very people for whom William Threlfall, Jacob Links, and Johannes Jager, bled and died.

* Missionary Notices, 1847.

"And I heard a voice from Heaven saying, write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; for their works follow with them."

Many honoured Wesleyan ministers, besides those mentioned in this story, laboured successfully in Great Namaqualand and in the regions beyond. The names of J. Tindall, B. Ridsdale, R. Ridgill, J. A. Bailie, R. Haddy, J. Thomas, H. Tindall, and J. Priestly are inseparably associated with the Missions once held by our Church in those inhospitable lands.

Like St. Paul, these devoted missionaries were "in journeyings often . . . . in perils of rivers. . . . in perils in the wilderness. . . . in perils in the sea. . . . in labour and travail. . . . in watchings often"; and, as the result, not a few Stations were established. The work, too, which was wonderfully successful, was generously supported, first by Mr. Nisbet and then by an English lady who gave £700 towards its maintenance.

In view of all this, the writer would fain leave unwritten much that is here related, but candour compels him to record what occurred.

The difficulties of the Great Namaqualand Missions could hardly be exaggerated; discouragements were many and great, labourers alas! were few, and funds were low. Other and more populous fields doubtless presented greater attractions and promised a better return. For Great Namaqualand and Damaraland were, then as now, thinly populated, and subject periodically to terrible droughts which reduced the Natives to the verge of starvation. The Rhenish missionaries, however, nothing daunted, though later in the field than the agents either of the London Missionary Society or of our own Church, established themselves in the land. All honour to them. But as they advanced, the other Societies retired. The London Missionary Society first, and then our own Missionary Committee in England, handed over all their Stations in Great Namaqualand and Damaraland to these zealous missionaries. It is heart-rending, even to-day, to read

that the people of Nisbet Bath remonstrated in vain, saying, "We are your spiritual children; you must not cast us off," and there are not a few of our ablest administrators who characterise the policy then pursued as "a deplorable one." In referring to this subject, the Rev. Joseph Whiteside, in his *History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa*, writes:

> The official mind was haunted by the spectre of debt, and the Damaras could not appeal to British sympathies as did the Fijians and the Hindus. With deep regret, the sacrifice had to be made; and it was a relief that the Rhenish missionaries were at hand to take the Stations into their charge. They were the representatives of the noble Protestant Churches of Cologne, Elberfeld, and Barmen, in the valley of the Rhine. They belonged to the Church of the saintly Krummacher, and Professor Christlieb: to the Church of the Deaconesses' Institute at Kaiserworth. They had given themselves with great devotion to the work of evangelizing the Native races of Great Namaqualand, and it was believed that in their hands the work begun by the Wesleyans would be faithfully carried on. Accordingly in the year 1867, the Missions at Nisbet Bath and Hoole's Fountain were transferred to the Rhenish Missionary Society, and these names disappeared from the Minutes of the Wesleyan Church. Wesleyville and Concordiaville had been handed over to the same Society sixteen years before. . . . . Happily the Stations were taken over by a Society whose missionaries have kept up the best traditions of missionary enterprise.

It is perhaps impossible for us to realise how great the difficulties were which led to the abandonment of these Missions, and it is certainly not for us to say that the action of the Committee was not justified. But it is humiliating, all the same, to think that the work which was too arduous, too full of discouragements and expensive for us to continue, has from that day to this been successfully carried on

by others. Yet we contemplate the success which has attended the labours of the Rhenish missionaries with feelings of profound gratitude. In the providence of God they were raised up to continue the work which had been so nobly begun by Threlfall, by Links, by Jager, and others. Our Church might justly have been branded as recreant to its Lord, had the field been left vacant; but it was not so left, and it is inconceivable that these Missions would have been abandoned had not our missionaries been fully persuaded that those to whom they committed their work would be faithful to the sacred trust. This was our Fathers' comfort in the past as they sorrowfully turned their backs upon these historic fields hallowed by so many sacred associations, and, in the light of fuller knowledge, it is our comfort to-day.

The lessons, however, of what at best must be regarded as partial defeat are here writ large, and perhaps it was never more necessary than it is at present that we should take those lessons to heart. There are other fields, around which hallowed memories cluster, that may justly be claimed as our own, which we are in danger of losing from precisely the same causes as those which cost us our Missions in Great Namaqualand.

It should be a shame to us to regard any Christian work as too isolated, or arduous, or expensive; and we should not so regard it if our lives were fully consecrated to the Service of our Lord and Master. Methodism ought, moreover, to adapt herself to all kinds of work. Nothing that is possible to others should be impossible to us. The passion for aggressive work which consumed our Methodist forefathers should not be allowed to die in us; and the hardships, the privations, the perils, which the early missionaries cheerfully endured, should, when necessary, be as cheerfully faced by us. We have been called to a Service which involves continuous self-denial. Our missionaries expected this in the olden days, and we must certainly expect it to-day. If we do not expect it, and face it cheerfully when it comes, others will most assuredly be found to take our place and to do our work.

CHAPTER XIX.

A Missionary Veteran.

The death of Mr. Threlfall, as may be supposed, sent a thrill of horror through all the Methodist Societies from John-o'-Groat's to Land's End, and his tragic story was related from missionary platforms all over the United Kingdom, and, indeed, wherever the Methodist standard had been reared throughout the civilised world.

In Nicolson Square Chapel, Edinburgh, a young man listened with the deepest interest to the recital of William Threlfall's short but brilliant missionary career, as it fell from the lips of the Rev. James Townley, D.D., one of the Secretaries of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. The narrative as related by the speaker was most affecting, and he concluded by asking: Who there in that meeting, would consecrate himself to the service of the Lord? Who would step into the breach which had been made in the ranks of the missionaries? Who would again bear aloft the Standard of the Cross which had fallen from the martyrs' hands?

The young man just mentioned, feeling constrained under the power of the Spirit to respond to Dr. Townley's appeal, broke the solemn stillness by saying:

"*Here am I, send me.*"

That young man was George Scott, father of the Rev. James Scott, of the South African Conference. There were two providential reasons why his wish to be Threlfall's successor was not fulfilled, as we can now clearly understand. One of these was, the way was not yet open. Another was, that a different sphere was available for which he was admirably fitted. Of Dr. George Scott's wonderful twelve years' ministry in Sweden, from 1830—1842, it does not come within the

scope of this story to write particularly. Suffice it to say that Lord Bloomfield, the British Ambassador to the Swedish court, owed his conversion to that ministry, and that its results still remain.* Dr. Scott was held by his Brethren in the ministry in the highest esteem for his own and for his work's sake, and there is no doubt that but for the failure of his health he would have been elected President of the British Conference.

The work which it was in the heart of the father to do, but which in the wisdom of the Conference and the providence of God he was not permitted to accomplish, was reserved for his honoured son. For James Scott was from the first a missionary. He is one of the few men in this country who, having mastered one of the Native languages, is able to preach in it fluently. He spent ten happy years at Thaba'Nchu, and is known to-day as the father of the Baralongs; and though in after years he became the Superintendent of important English Circuits—Bloemfontein, Durban, Kimberley, and then Bloemfontein again—holding, in addition, the Chairmanship of the Districts in which he resided, he remained what he was from the first, and is to-day—a missionary, delighting wherever possible to minister to the dusky sons of Africa, in their own tongue.

It is a far cry from a Bushman's Kraal in Great Namaqualand in 1825, to the Conference Hall at Pietermaritzburg in 1909, and the link which connects James Scott with William Threlfall is known only to a few.

* * * * *

"The younger men salute the last of the Old Guard, who is passing." So said a young Scotsman to the older Scotsman who, at the Pietermaritzburg Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa, held in the year 1909, was putting off the harness after a long and honourable ministerial career, extending over a period of fifty years. There was little in the appearance of the veteran, save his

* See Smith's "History of Methodism," Vol. III. pp. 316, 347.

white flowing beard and "hoary head" to indicate that he had come to the end of a long and toilsome day; for his form was erect, his step was firm and elastic, his eye was undimmed, and his natural force seemed unabated. Yet no one begrudged him the "rest at eventide" to which he looked forward. He had been singularly successful as a missionary, as a minister, as the Chairman of a District, as Secretary and President of the Conference, and he was honoured and beloved by all. In the light of the setting sun he presented a figure at once picturesque, interesting and pathetic.

"The last of the Old Guard," he was passing, and young and old were prepared not only to salute him, but to do him homage, for his own, then for his work's sake; and last, but not least, because of the interesting link which he formed with the past.

Many and glowing were the tributes paid to this good man's character and to the value of his work. Yet those who spoke, and those who listened, realised as they had seldom done before, the poverty of language, even as it fell from eloquent lips, to express all that was in the hearts of the Fathers and Brethren on the occasion referred to. It is true they spoke under restraint, in the presence of the veteran himself. The following extract from a resolution of the Synod of his District was read and highly approved by the Conference:—

> "We recognise, with peculiar gratitude, the fidelity of his service, the unvarying energy and diligence with which he has laboured in the discharge of the important trusts assigned to him, his beautiful exposition in word and deed of the doctrines and spirit of the religion of Jesus Christ, which have done so much to make men wiser, happier and better; and the inestimable privilege which we have so long enjoyed in being guided and instructed by his wise and kind counsels as the Chairman of the District. His ministry, extending over a period of fifty years, chiefly spent in this country, draws to its close amid the esteem and love of our ministers and people, both European and Native, and indeed of the whole community."

After several leading ministers, both European and Native, had spoken, the retiring minister replied. He felt humbled yet thankful to God and his brethren for the kindly sentiments expressed. He realised that he had often failed, but it had been his chief delight to serve God. He loved the Church; he loved his home; he loved his brethren; he loved all men. God had been very gracious to him, and he trusted he should be spared for many years of service.

Every heart said Amen!

The curtain which veils the Divine dealings from our eyes is lifted sometimes even in this life, and those who have eyes to see are mercifully afforded a glimpse—which is long remembered—of God's marvellous dovetailing of circumstances in their favour. Such glimpses are occasional, in our individual lives. If they were too frequent they would leave no room for faith, and so defeat the object for which they are granted. But they are not infrequent in history. It is, indeed, one of the charms of history that many things become luminous in the perspective which the "long view" enables us to obtain. The tragic end of William Threlfall furnishes one of the most striking instances of this that our South African Methodism affords. For his influence has extended with the circling years, and it still gathers momentum as time proceeds. Can it be that but for the tragedy enacted in Great Namaqualand eighty-four years ago—for such it was to all human seeming—George Scott would never have become a missionary and that his son James might have spent his life in commercial pursuits?

So we close with the reflection that although life presents us with mysteries we cannot pretend to unravel, "somehow good will be the final goal of ill"; for "We know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to His purpose."

THE END.

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